



## SCHOOLS Broomfield, Colorado

During the public comments section of the Adams 12 Five Star Schools Board of Education's March 16 meeting, the mother of a district child, D. Barnes, implored board members to remove two books from district libraries.

At the meeting, Barnes said the books *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe and *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison, were analogous to "Playboy or Hustler or Maxim or Penthouse."

Both are critically-acclaimed and award-winning books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) themes and characters. Both received Alex Awards. However, only *Lawn Boy* was held by a school library in the Adams 12 district.

Others in attendance spoke about the danger of banning books and the importance of having inclusive texts in school libraries. Attendees also voiced support of the Gay Straight Alliance and gender neutral bathrooms.

At the April 20 meeting, Barnes again raised complaints about *Lawn Boy*, claiming it is "a sexual grooming resource."

Superintendent Chris Gdowski indicated he would read *Lawn Boy* and make a determination about its suitability at a future board meeting.

At the June 15 board meeting, Gdowski methodically dismantled all of Barnes's allegations against *Lawn Boy*, using dictionary and legal definitions, court rulings, the state board of education's comprehensive health education standards, the American Library Association's (ALA) selection of *Lawn Boy* for an Alex Award, and citations from his copy of the text.

*Lawn Boy* will remain on the shelf at the Horizon High School.

**Reported in: KDVR, March 30, 2022; "Adams 12 Five Star**

## Schools' Board of Education Meeting," June 15, 2022, on YouTube.

## Lee County, Florida

During the public comments section of the February 8 board meeting of the School District of Lee County, three parents spoke out against three different books.

The parents demanded the immediate removal of *Killing Mr. Griffin* by Lois Duncan, *Sloppy Firsts* by Megan McCafferty, and *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins from school libraries due to a portrayal of kissing and including Christian characters who were intolerant.

A district spokesperson stated that *Sloppy Firsts* was not held by any of their school libraries. Formal requests for reconsideration were not submitted for the other two titles and the board indicated no intent to review the titles without them.

However, Lee County School board member Debbie Jordan informed parents they could place restrictions on their children's school library accounts to prevent them from checking out books they believe to be inappropriate.

Jordan Von Cannon, assistant professor of language and literature at Florida Gulf Coast University, said that removing books about violence, trauma, and explorations of sex and sexuality doesn't make those things go away, "but it may take [away] the opportunity that a student has to experience them in the safety of a fictional space."

**Reported in: WINK, February 9, 2022.**

## Columbia County, Georgia

A parent challenged the use of Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning *To Kill a Mockingbird* in freshman English classes at the Columbia County

School District and formally requested its removal from school and classroom libraries.

The book is not required reading, but it is approved for in-class instruction for high school freshmen and a teacher at one of the district high schools elects to use it.

The parent objected to the use of racial epithets in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The book was retained after its initial review, however the parent appealed this decision.

A review committee composed of teachers and parents read the book, evaluated it on a rubric, and listened to the parent's concerns as part of their decision-making process.

On February 22, Associate Superintendent Michele Sherman shared their determination to retain the title and continue allowing its instructional use. Sherman also dismissed accusations made against other school library material at recent board meetings.

"We do not provide pornography to our students," said Sherman.

**Reported in: WJBF, February 14, 2022; The Augusta Chronicle, February 23, 2022.**

## Lake Villa, Illinois

At the December 2 board meeting for Community High School District 117, members of the group Parents of Antioch Community Committee voiced objections to two books available at high school libraries: *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison and *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe.

The district tasked their Book Review Committee with assessing the appropriateness of *Gender Queer*. They determined the book should remain available without restriction, as it is a valuable resource supporting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) population.



The pressure group returned to the March 24 board meeting and again protested *Gender Queer*. Members of Indivisible Western Lake County Community also came to the meeting and spoke in defense of the title and of school libraries.

The district removed the graphic novel from the shelves and placed it behind the circulation desk, so students would have to request it.

A student petition against the decision to restrict access to *Gender Queer* garnered over 520 signatures in a week.

On April 5, it was reported that Superintendent Jim McKay reversed the board's decision and the book was returned to library shelves.

**Reported in: Community High School District 117 Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 2, 2022; Lake County Journal, March 25, 2022; Chicago Tribune, April 5, 2022.**

### Park Ridge, Illinois

A group called "Freedom Park Ridge," led by Sal Galati, encouraged residents to email Park Ridge Public Library director Joanna Bertucci alleging the library administrators "lack judgment which disqualifies them for these roles" because the library has young adult books on gender identity and sexuality and which include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/ questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) characters.

The March 15th board meeting was dominated by discussion of emails sent by the group. More than a dozen people in attendance spoke out in defense of the library and inclusive, representational materials. Many showed up after seeing messages from Freedom Park Ridge on Facebook and Instagram.

Galati spoke at the meeting, urging the board to remove books

discussing sexuality and those that portray LGBTQIA+ characters and to "reevaluate their procurement process of materials." He specifically objected to teen book discussions of *Felix Ever After* by Kacen Callender, *The Girl from the Sea* by Molly Ostertag, and *Ana on the Edge* by A.J. Sass.

Kim Schaefer said, "As a teen, the library was a refuge for me. Having those books showed me that I was not alone, that I was not a freak, that there were other people like that. From a very personal perspective, removing books like that would be detrimental to the mental health of other LGBT youth, but beyond that, all teens in my opinion benefit from being able to read about experiences that are not their own because it builds empathy."

At the end of public comments, library board president Lauren Rapisand diplomatically stated the board is working to review the library's collection management policy to "ensure that the library is operating in a manner that is reflective of our times."

Freedom Park Ridge indicated they "have similar issues coming up at our local school boards as well, so stay tuned."

**Reported in: Park Ridge Herald-Advocate, March 29, 2022.**

### Blue Valley, Kansas

In early 2022, three books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/ questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) characters, authors, and themes were challenged at the Blue Valley School District in Johnson County, Kansas.

On March 24, the school board voted 5-2 to retain two LGBTQIA+ graphic novels, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* by Alison Bechdel and *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe. The two board members who voted for the books' removal were Kaety Bowers and Jim McMullen,

conservatives elected in November, 2021.

The matter came before the board after parent Todd Farnsworth appealed the prior recommendations to retain made by both high school and school district reconsideration committees.

Cristy Bolton, district library media coordinator spoke in favor of the titles' inclusion in high school libraries. Bolton said they were valuable for representing LGBTQIA+ Blue Valley students and for "offering an opportunity for others to understand the journey of someone who identifies as LGBTQIA+."

*All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George G. Johnson was also challenged in January. A high school reconsideration committee voted to retain the title. When this decision was appealed, a district-level reconsideration committee also voted to retain it. No further appeal was made in this case.

**Reported in: The Kansas City Star, March 24, 2022; Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Salina, Kansas

After reading about a book challenge that took place at the Goddard Kansas High School in November 2021, community members began inquiring if *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson was available from any libraries in the Salina Public Schools district.

On January 22, a community member posted pictures from the book on Facebook, tagging the school district, alleging that librarians at Salina High School South were in violation of "KS law" and encouraging people "to flood the district with phone calls."

On January 25, Chad Farber, pastor of Salina's Central Baptist Church



submitted a request for the book's reconsideration. Farber alleged "this material could be used by some to experiment w/ anal sex on other students."

A committee that included a principal, a librarian, teachers, and parents reviewed the book and recommended that it be retained. This decision was then appealed to the school board.

On May 4, the Salina Public Schools Board of Education upheld the review committee's decision, affirming that the book belonged and would remain on high school library shelves.

(See: *this issue: In Brief: Salina, Kansas; Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.7 iss.1: Censorship Dateline: Libraries: Goddard, Kansas*).

**Reported in: *Salina Journal*, February 9, 2022; Office for Intellectual Freedom Challenge Report.**

### Old Town, Maine

In December of 2021, Regional School Unit 34 received its first request to reconsider a library book in at least 45 years.

A parent submitted a form requesting Rupri Kaur's *Milk and Honey* from the Leonard Middle School library and two classroom libraries over its depiction of sexual abuse.

The reconsideration committee recommended that the title be retained. The parent appealed the committee's decision. On March 16, the school board voted to uphold the committee's recommendation and retain the title.

At the meeting, Gert Nesin, principal of Leonard Middle School said "The first few chapters . . . representing sexual assault and its effects are descriptive and disturbing, as is sexual assault. Sexual encounter, both voluntary and involuntary, are part of our

students' lives, even as young as sixth grade."

Parents and educators voiced their support for retaining the book in large part due to the benefit it could have for students who experienced sexual abuse.

**Reported in: *Bangor Daily News*, March 18, 2022.**

### Silver Lake, Massachusetts

In February, a reconsideration committee was formed to review *So Far from the Bamboo Grove* by Yoko Kawashima Watkins. A parent filed a form requesting that the book be removed from the seventh grade curriculum and for its use to be restricted to high school students.

Watkins's award-winning semi-autobiographical novel chronicles her family's struggle to escape Korea at the end of World War II, following its liberation from Japanese occupation. It is told from the perspective of an 11-year-old Japanese girl. The parent objected to its depictions of sexual assault.

On March 24, the committee released their recommendations. They unanimously agreed that the book was appropriate for us in the seventh grade curriculum.

The committee took the opportunity to remind families that they can opt for alternate texts for their children.

**Reported in: *Patriot Ledger*, February 22, 2022; *Kingston Reporter*, March 24, 2022.**

### Yorktown, New York

At the February 7 board meeting of the Yorktown Central School District, Superintendent Ron Hattar announced that the nine books which were temporarily removed from the middle and high school libraries in the district were undergoing evaluation by the Instructional Material Review

committee. Hattar said they would remain inaccessible to students while review was underway.

The committee consists of teachers, administrators, a library media specialist and community members randomly selected from a pool of volunteers.

The books were challenged for dealing with topics of sexuality, racism, and police brutality. All titles had authors and/or protagonists who are Black, indigenous, or people of color, and/ or who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/ questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+).

Between March 24 and June 30, the committee submitted their reports to Hattar. In every instance, they recommended that the books remain in the library collections. Hattar affirmed the committee's recommendations.

Titles challenged in this case:

- *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George Johnson
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe
- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
- *Jack of Hearts (and Other Parts)* by L.C. Rosen
- *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison
- *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas

**Reported in: *Tap into Yorktown*, February 24, 2022; *Patch*, March 3, 2022.**

### Moore County, North Carolina

On March 14, the board of Moore County Schools voted to retain *George* (now published as *Melissa*) by Alex Gino in the libraries of both McDeeds



Creek Elementary and Union Pines High School. The vote was not unanimous, with three members voting for the book's removal.

Board member Rovert Levy made separate motions to remove the book from the elementary school library and the high school library. Levy said he primarily objected to the book's use of gender-affirming pronouns.

While both of Levy's motions failed, board member Philip Holmes vowed to remove the book from schools and said he would continue setting the review process in motion until the book is removed.

The board's decision affirmed recommendations from three separate committees that reviewed the book in response to a complaint from Jim Pedersen, an individual who does not have any children enrolled in the district.

The matter came before the board because Pedersen appealed the recommendations from committees at each school, both of which voted to retain the title. A third district-wide committee met four times during February and also recommended retaining the book in both school libraries.

Jim Pedersen filed the request for the title's reconsideration in December after Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson called for it to be removed from schools because it has a transgender character. (*See: Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.6 iss.4: For the Record: North Carolina*).

Pedersen's complaint included his belief that "cross dressing and sex changes [are] personal family business that should be up to the parents."

Sara Wallace presented a more inclusive perspective when she spoke during the board meeting. "The questions asked on those pages are genuine questions that a child going through those events would ask," said Wallace.

"That is the key here: being granted that sense of representation, something that we in the transgender community often lack," Wallace continued. "These children deserve to feel represented by having books and media that portray their struggles and their triumphs just as anyone else."

**Reported in: *The Pilot*, March 15, 2022.**

### Salem-Keizer, Oregon

On March 15, Casity Troutt filed a request for the removal of *Stamped for Kids* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi from libraries at elementary schools in the Salem-Keizer public school district.

Troutt is vice president of Salem-Keizer We Stand Together, a group of local community members advocating for "parent's rights" and "educational transparency." Their efforts focus primarily on critical race theory, gender identity, and sexuality.

A nine-member reconsideration committee consisting of a school librarian, parents, school administrators, teachers, and a student was formed to evaluate the book. They voted 8-1 to retain it in all school libraries on April 11.

**Reported in: *Salem Statesman Journal*, April 18, 2022.**

### Delaware Valley, Pennsylvania

On February 8, a community member with no children enrolled at the Delaware Valley School District (DVSD) began making social media posts about "pornographic books" held in district libraries.

The individual discovered the books by searching the library catalog for titles from a 16-page list that Matt Krause, chair of the Texas House Committee on General Investigating, sent to every school district administrator in Texas (*see: Journal of*

*Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.6 iss.4: For the Record: Texas*).

A number of district administrators throughout Texas viewed this and a coinciding letter from Texas Governor Abbott about "pornography or other inappropriate" materials in schools as a call to remove the books from libraries.

The individual who made the social media posts attended the DVSD school board meeting on February 10 and called for the books' removal from district libraries. She submitted requests for reconsideration for seven titles on February 11.

The requests were denied, as her children were enrolled at a school that was not part of the district.

At the March 10 DVSD work session, board president Jack Fisher affirmed that the district would be retaining the 7 challenged titles.

Also during the meeting, Matthew Contreras, president of Pennsylvania Advocacy for Children's Education (PACE), said he wanted to challenge an additional title. According to PACE's website, they "value education over indoctrination." Contreras said the book he wanted to challenge pertained to suicide, but the title was not specified.

Gina Mancato then said that too many of the district's books "focus on suicide and rape and how to get a gun to kill and hunt humans."

At the April 21 board meeting, member Dawn Bukaj announced that parents could flag books in the catalog that they don't want their children to check out.

Titles known to have been challenged in this case:

- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Lily and Dunkin* by Donna Gephart
- *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope





Pérez

- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- *TTFN (Ta Ta for Now)* by Lauren Myracle
- *TTYL (Talk to You Later)* by Lauren Myracle

**Reported in: Pike County Courier, March 2, 2022, and March 17, 2022; Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Hempfield, Pennsylvania

An optional read for middle school ELA literature circles in the Hempfield Area School District was challenged by a parent of a 7th grader on January 9.

A committee reviewed the challenged book, *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart, and voted to retain it in the collection and keep it on the optional reading list.

Despite the outcome, a group of parents coalesced around the prospect of removing library books, and routinely attends board meetings to speak out during the public comment sections.

Formal requests for reconsideration were received in February for *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson and *The Black Friend: On Being a Better White Person* by Frederick Joseph.

During their meeting on March 8, the school board announced that these titles would also remain available to students, in keeping with the reconsideration committee's recommendations. However, board president Tony Bompiani said the board would explore other ways for parents to prevent their children from reading.

Bompiani said the board would consider changing their reconsideration policy to make it easier for books to be removed from the

collection. He also said they would consider allowing parents to monitor what their children check out from the library.

Finally, Bompiani suggested separating library books into ones that are "offensive" and ones that aren't and requiring parental permission to check out "offensive" titles.

"I'm advocating here to find common ground to separate them," said Bompiani. "Let them be available, but separate them. Because I was disgusted by that book."

Parents continued to raise objections to library books during the public comments sections of board meetings through June 20.

**Reported in: Tribune Review, March 9, 2022, March 11, 2022, Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report**

### North Smithfield, Rhode Island

On February 15, several parents spoke out in opposition to a list of titles they believed to be "pornographic" during the public comments section of the North Smithfield Public Schools board meeting.

The group read excerpts from the books and demanded answers on how the books wound up in school libraries. "I don't know how these books have made it into our libraries, onto our shelves for our children to access, but it's alarming to say the least," said parent Arianna Ramos.

The fourteen books included on their list received numerous awards and accolades. Many of them have characters and authors who are Black, indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC), or who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+). Public comments from the group indicate that this was not

coincidental, but very much their point.

"*Drama* is about homosexuality," said Deborah Gianfrancesco, who provided the title list to the board. "I don't know how other parents feel. I find it to be completely inappropriate."

In response to the concerns raised by the group, board chair James Lombardi requested a review of all books at North Smithfield schools and a report on the findings.

"My position is that the administration needs to review the books and make a determination of what's appropriate and what's not," said Lombardi.

A group of LGBTQIA+ students attended the March 15 school board meeting in defense of the challenged titles and in opposition to the efforts to limit students' access to them.

At the meeting, superintendent Michael St. Jean presented a policy which would govern the material reconsideration process for the district. It was modeled on ones provided by the Rhode Island Department of Education and local and national library associations.

A second reading of the library policy and procedures including reconsideration was held during the April 12 board meeting. The policy was approved after its second reading. The school did not previously have a policy for reconsidering library materials.

The new reconsideration form does not appear to have been used for any of the contested titles. As of September 30, all of them remain available for circulation.

Titles challenged in this case:

- *Beloved* by Toni Morrison
- *By the Time You Read this, I'll be Dead* by Julie Anne Peters
- *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier



- *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer
- *Fly on the Wall: How One Girl Saw Everything* by E. Lockhart
- *More Happy Than Not* by Adam Silvera
- *Sloppy Firsts* by Megan McCafferty
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini
- *The Truth about Alice* by Jennifer Mathieu
- *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher
- *This One Summer* by Mariko Tamaki, Jillian Tamaki
- *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Two Boys Kissing* by David Levithan

**Reported in: *Northern Rhode Island Now*, February 22, 2022; *The Valley Breeze*, March 17, 2022.**

## McKinney, Texas

In mid-February, parents Paul and Rachel Elliott challenged 280 titles at the 31 schools in the McKinney Independent School District (ISD). Only five titles were challenged in the previous decade.

The book challenges dominated the public comments section of the February 22 board meeting, with nearly 30 people speaking on the topic. One man was removed from the meeting for heckling a high school student who spoke out against banning books.

After the meeting, a district spokesperson said that committees are reviewing the books challenged and that by policy, parents must have read the books they're challenging and detail what they believe to be inappropriate about the text.

The Elliotts said all the books they challenged are included on state representative Matt Krause's list of targeted titles and that they started

reading the books once the list was made public (*see: Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.6 iss.4: For the Record: Texas*).

While the majority of titles included in the Krause list document the lives and experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) individuals and those who are Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), it included a number of errors, such as duplication of titles, and what appeared to be false positives for catalog search terms.

The list submitted by the Elliotts reproduces errors on the original Krause list. The synopses they provided in their requests for reconsideration also appear to have been copied and pasted from abstracts included in an online library catalog.

Every request for reconsideration they filled out also includes the same objection: "Contains 1 or more of the following: Marxism, incest, sexual explicit material—in written form and/ or visual pictures, pornography, CRT, immoral activities, rebellious against parents, and the material contradicts the ISD's student handbook."

State representative Jared Patterson took some credit for the Elliotts' efforts. Speaking of the efforts to remove books from school libraries, Patterson said, "I've been the face of this movement for the last six months."

Patterson said he and his staff have sent letters asking Texas school districts to pledge not to do business with certain book vendors who considers to be responsible for furnishing schools with the reading material he opposes. He said thirty districts have signed the pledge, but McKinney has not.

"I think the book vendors need to be held accountable for selling this trash," said Patterson.

On April 15, superintendent Rick McDaniel sent a letter to all district parents in which he stated that "The school library books debate has been largely fueled by political agendas, sensationalism, and exaggeration." In it, he noted that many of the books being discussed during the public comments of school board meetings aren't even on district library shelves.

"It is important to recognize that our teachers and library media specialists take great measures to ensure that library resources are safe and appropriate for students," wrote Patterson. "Parents always have the right to determine what is appropriate for their child and can provide librarians with a list of books or topics that their child is not permitted to access."

Responding to McDaniel's letter, McKinney Mayor George Fuller also spoke out against the efforts to ban books, characterizing them as "partisan pandering" and not actually about protecting children. He asserted that efforts to remove reading materials from school libraries caused children harm.

"What is happening now, weaponizing our children and our teachers and the collateral damage that's being done to the teaching profession, is hurting our students," said Fuller.

To date, no books have been removed from McKinney ISD libraries in response to challenges from the Elliotts.

Titles challenged in this case:

- *10 Things I Can See from Here* by Carrie Mac
- *7 Days at the Hot Corner* by Terry Trueman
- *A Case of Need* by Michael Crichton
- *A Complicated Love Story Set in Space* by Shaun David Hutchinson
- *A Good Kind of Trouble* by Lisa Moore Ramée



- *A High Five for Glenn Burke* by Phil Bildner
- *A Home for Goddesses and Dogs* by Leslie Connor
- *A Line in the Dark* by Malinda Lo
- *A Very, Very Bad Thing* by Jeffery Self
- *Abortion: Interpreting the Constitution* by Carol Hand
- *Abortion: Opposing Viewpoints* by Tamara L. Roleff
- *Abortion: Understanding the Debate* by Kathlyn Gay
- *Absolute Brightness* by James Lecesne
- *After* by Amy Efav
- *Afterworlds* by Scott Westerfeld
- *Alison, Who Went Away* by Vivian Vande Velde
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds, Brendan Kiely
- *All the Things We Do in the Dark* by Saundra Mitchell
- *All We Can Do Is Wait* by Richard Lawson
- *Almost Perfect* by Brian Katcher
- *An African American and Latinx History of the United States* by Paul Ortiz
- *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People* by Jean Mendoza
- *Ana on the Edge* by A.J. Sass
- *And She Was* by Jessica Verdi
- *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson, Peter Parnell
- *Another Kind of Cowboy* by Susan Jubly
- *Antonio's Card = La Tarjeta de Antonio* by Rigoberto Gonzalez
- *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Saenz
- *As I Descended* by Robin Talley
- *Ash* by Malinda Lo
- *Ask Me How I Got Here* by Christine Heppermann
- *Ask the Passengers* by A. S. King
- *At the Edge of the Universe* by Shaun David Hutchinson
- *Autoboyography* by Christina Lauren
- *Beast* by Brie Spangler
- *Beautiful Music for Ugly Children* by Kirstin Cronn-Mills
- *Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender Teen)* by Jazz Jennings
- *Being the Change: Lessons and Strategies to Teach Social Comprehension* by Sara Ahmed
- *Between Mom and Jo* by Julie Anne Peters
- *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Black Rabbit Summer* by Kevin Brooks
- *Blood Sport* by Tash McAdam
- *Boy Girl Boy* by Ronald Koertge
- *Brave Face* by Shaun David Hutchinson
- *Caste: The Origin of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson
- *Cemetery Boys* by Aiden Thomas
- *Cider House Rules* by John Irving
- *Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine
- *Class Act* by Jerry Craft
- *Combat Zone* by Patrick Jones
- *Crossing Lines* by Paul Volponi
- *Dancing Naked* by Shelley Hrdlitschka
- *Darius the Great Deserves Better* by Adib Khorram
- *Dateable: Are You? Are They?* by Justin Lookadoo
- *Daughters Unto Devils* by Amy Lukavics
- *Dear Diary, I'm Pregnant: Teenagers Talk About Their Pregnancies* by Annrenee Englander
- *Death Wind* by William Bell
- *Drag Teen* by Jeffery Self
- *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier
- *Draw the Line* by Laurent Linn
- *Dreadnought* by April Daniels
- *Dreadnought: H.I. V.E. Vol. 4* by Mark Walden
- *Each of Us a Desert* by Mark Oshiro
- *Echo After Echo* by Amy Rose Capetta
- *Eight Seconds* by Jean Ferris
- *Everything Changes* by Samantha Hale
- *Everything Leads to You* by Nina LaCour
- *Expecting* by Shannon Freeman
- *Falling Hard: 100 Love Poems by Teenagers* by Betsy Franco
- *Fancy White Trash* by Marjetta Geerling
- *Far from the Tree: How Children and their Parents Learn to Accept One Another, Our Differences Unite Us* by Andrew Solomon
- *Felix Ever After* by Kacen Callender
- *Flamer* by Mike Curato
- *Follow Your Arrow* by Jessica Verdi
- *Forget this Ever Happened* by Cassandra Rose Clarke
- *Freak Show* by James St. James
- *Freakboy* by Kristin Elizabeth Clark
- *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces* by Isabel Quintero
- *Gender Danger: Survivors of Rape, Human Trafficking, and Honor Killings* by Rae Simons
- *Gingerbread* by Rachel Cohn
- *Girl Made of Stars* by Ashley Herring Blake
- *Girl Mans Up* by M-E Girard
- *Girl Nearly 16, Absolute Torture* by Sue Limb
- *Girls vs. Guys: Surprising Differences Between the Sexes* by Michael J. Rosen
- *GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for the Queer & Questioning Teens* by Kelly Huegel
- *Glitter* by Babygirl Daniels
- *Golden Boy: A Novel* by Abigail Tarttelin
- *Gracefully Grayson* by Ami Polonsky



- *Grasshopper Jungle* by Andrew Smith
- *Grown in 60 Seconds* by Darrien Lee
- *Guardian* by Alex London
- *Hang-Ups, Hook-Ups, and Holding Out: Stuff You Need to Know About Your Body, Sex, and Dating* by Melisa Holmes
- *Happy Families* by Tanita Davis
- *Have I Ever Told You Black Lives Matter* by Shani Mahiri King
- *Her Royal Highness* by Rachel Hawkins
- *Highly Illogical Behavior* by John Corey Whaley
- *History is All You Left Me* by Adam Silvera
- *Hold Me Closer: The Tiny Cooper Story* by David Levithan
- *Homosexuality: Opposing Viewpoints* by Auriana Ojeda
- *Homosexuality: Opposing Viewpoints* by William Dudley
- *Honestly Ben* by Bill Konigsberg
- *Hot Dog Girl* by Jennifer Dugan
- *How it All Blew Up* by Arvin Ahmadi
- *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *Hurricane Child* by Kacen Callender
- *If I Was Your Girl* by Meredith Russo
- *If Wishes Were Horses* by Merry McInerney-Whiteford
- *If You Could Be Mine* by Sara Farizan
- *I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson
- *In Other Lands* by Sarah Rees Brennan
- *In Our Mothers' House* by Patricia Polacco
- *In the Role of Brie Hutchens...* by Nicole Melleby
- *Infinity Son* by Adam Silvera
- *It's Not Like it's a Secret* by Misa Sugiura
- *Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World* by Ashley Herring Blake
- *Jane Against the World: Roe v. Wade and the Fight for Reproductive Rights* by Karen Blumenthal
- *Jane, Unlimited* by Kristin Cashore
- *Jaya and Rasa Fall in Love* by Sonia Patel
- *Julian at the Wedding* by Jessica Love
- *Juliet Takes a Breath* by Gabby Rivera
- *Jumpstart the World* by Catherine Ryan Hyde
- *Katie.com: My Story* [also published as *A Girl's Life Online: My Story*] by Katherine Tarbox
- *Kids Still Having Kids: Talking about Teen Pregnancy* by Janet Bode
- *Kiss Number 8* by Colleen AF Venable, Ellen T. Crenshaw
- *Kiss the Morning Star* by Elissa Janine Hoole
- *La Guia Esencial Sobre Sexualidad Adolescente: Un Manual Indispensable para los Adolescentes y Padres de Hoy* by Michael J Basso
- *Last Exit to Normal* by Michael Harmon
- *Laura Dean Keeps Breaking Up With Me* by Mariko Tamaki
- *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison
- *Let's Talk About Love* by Claire Kann
- *LGBT Families* by L.K. Currie-McGhee
- *LGBTQ+ Athletes Claim the Field: Striving for Equality* by Kirstin Cronn-Mills
- *Lily and Dunkin* by Donna Gephart
- *Little & Lion* by Brandy Colbert
- *Lizard Radio* by Pat Schmatz
- *Lobizona* by Romina Gerber
- *Looking for Group* by Rory Harrison
- *Love & Leftovers: A Novel in Verse* by Sarah Tregay
- *Love Drugged* by James Klise
- *Love is the Higher Law* by David Levithan
- *Luciana* by Maggie Wells
- *Marco Impossible* by Hannah Moskowitz
- *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews
- *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F Saad
- *Melissa* (previously published as *George*) by Alex Gino
- *Mighty Heart of St. James* by Ashley Herring Blake
- *More Happy Than Not* by Adam Silvera
- *More than a Game: Race, Gender, and Politics in Sport* by Matt Doeden
- *Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress* by Christine Baldacchino
- *Mousetraps* by Pat Schmatz
- *My Heart Underwater* by Laurel Flores Fantauzzo
- *My Invented Life* by Lauren Bjorkman
- *My Life as a Rhombus* by Varian Johnson
- *My Most Excellent Year: A Novel of Love, Mary Poppins, & Fenway Park* by Steve Kluger
- *My Rainbow* by Trinity Neal
- *Naomi and Ely's No Kiss List: A Novel* by Rachel Cohn
- *Nate Expectations* by Tim Federle
- *No Girls Allowed: Tales of Daring Women Dressed as Men for Love, Freedom and Adventure* by Susan Hughes
- *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness* by Anastasia Higginbotham
- *Notes from the Blender* by Trish Cook
- *October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard* by Lesléa Newman
- *Odd One Out* by Nic Stone
- *One of Those Hideous Books Where the Mother Dies* by Sonya Sones
- *One True Way* by Shannon Hitchcock
- *Openly Straight* by Bill Konigsberg





- *Ordinary Hazards* by Nikki Grimes
- *Our Own Private Universe* by Robin Talley
- *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights* by Rob Sanders
- *Pet* by Akwaeke Emezi
- *Pink* by Lili Wilkinson
- *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag* by Rob Sanders
- *Privacy* by Noel Merino
- *Proxy* by Alex London
- *Pulp* by Robin Talley
- *Putting Makeup on the Fat Boy* by Bil Wright
- *Queer, There, and Everywhere: 23 People Who Changed the World* by Sarah Prager
- *Rainbow Revolutionaries: 50 LGBTQ+ People Who Made History* by Sarah Prager
- *Red at the Bone* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *Redwood and Ponytail* by K.A. Holt
- *Rick* by Alex Gino
- *Roe v. Wade: A Woman's Choice* by Susan Dudley Gold
- *Safe Sex 101: An Overview for Teens* by Margaret O Hyde
- *Saturdays with Hitchcock* by Ellen Wittlinger
- *Scars* by C. A. Rainfield
- *See You at Harry's* by Johanna Knowles
- *Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation* by Duncan Tonatiuh
- *Sex, Puberty and All That Stuff: A Guide to Growing Up* by Jacqui Bailey
- *Shine* by Lauren Myracle
- *Shout* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* by Becky Albertalli
- *So Hard To Say* by Alex Sanchez
- *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo
- *Some Assembly Required: The Not-So-Secret Life of a Transgender Teen* by Arin Andrews
- *Some Girls Bind* by Rory James
- *Sovereign* by April Daniels
- *Spinning* by Tillie Walden
- *Stage Dreams* by Melanie Gillman
- *Stained* by Jennifer Jacobson
- *Stamped from the Beginning: the Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* by Chris Crutcher
- *Symptoms of Being Human* by Jeff Garvin
- *Tattoo Atlas* by Tim Floreen
- *Teen Legal Rights* by David L Hudson
- *Tell Me Again How a Crush Should Feel* by Sara Farizan
- *Tessa Masterson Will Go to Prom* by Emily Franklin
- *The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives* by Dashka Slater
- *The Abortion Controversy* by Lynette Knapp
- *The Art of Being Normal* by Lisa Williamson
- *The Best Man* by Richard Peck
- *The Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta
- *The Breakaways* by Cathy G. Johnson
- *The Bridge* by Bill Konigsberg
- *The Confessions of Nat Turner* by William Styron
- *The Courage to be Yourself: True Stories by Teens about Cliques, Conflicts, and Overcoming Peer Pressure* by Al Desetta
- *The Deep & Dark Blue* by Niki Smith
- *The Devouring Gray* by Christine Lynn Herman
- *The Downstairs Girl* by Stacey Lee
- *The Edge of the Water* by Elizabeth George
- *The Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine (5th ed.)* by Jacqueline L. Longe
- *The Gallery of Unfinished Girls* by Lauren Karcz
- *The Girls I've Been* by Tess Sharpe
- *The Gravity of Us* by Phil Stamper
- *The Great American Whatever* by Tim Federle
- *The Grief Keeper* by Alexandra Villasante
- *The Handmaid's Tale* (graphic novel) by Margaret Atwood, Renee Nault
- *The House You Pass On the Way* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *The Last to Let Go* by Amber Smith
- *The Love & Lies of Rukhsana Ali* by Sabina Khan
- *The Love Curse of Melody McIntyre* by Robin Talley
- *The Love Interest* by Cale Dietrich
- *The Magic Fish* by Trung Le Nguyen
- *The Migration North* by James De Medeiros
- *The Moon Within* by Aida Salazar
- *The Music of What Happens* by Bill Konigsberg
- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander
- *The Other Boy* by M.G. Hennessey
- *The Pants Project* by Cat Clarke
- *The Past and Other Things that Should Stay Buried* by Shaun David Hutchinson
- *The Polar Bear Explorers' Club* by Alex Bell
- *The Red Scrolls of Magic* by Cassandra Clare
- *The Ship We Built* by Lexie Bean
- *The Sin-Eater's Confession* by Ilsa J. Bick
- *The Stars and the Blackness Between Them* by Junauda Petrus
- *The Summer of Jordi Perez (and the Best Burger in Los Angeles)* by Amy Spalding
- *The Sweet Revenge of Celia Door* by Karen Finneyfrock
- *The Upside of Unrequited* by Becky Albertalli



- *The Way Back* by Carrie Mac
- *The Whispers* by Greg Howard
- *The You I've Never Known* by Ellen Hopkins
- *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera
- *They Called Themselves the KKK: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti
- *This Book is Anti-Racist* by Tiffany Jewell
- *This is Kind of an Epic Love Story* by Kacen Callender
- *This Is Your Time* by Ruby Bridges
- *This One Summer* by Mariko Tamaki, Jillian Tamaki
- *Tips On Having a Gay (Ex) Boyfriend* by Carrie Jones
- *Tomorrow will be Different: Love, Loss, and the Fight for Trans Equality* by Sarah McBride
- *Totally Joe* by James Howe
- *Trans Mission: My Quest to a Beard* by Alex Bertie
- *Transgender Rights and Protections* by Rebecca T Klein
- *Unpregnant* by Jenni Henriks
- *Wayward Witch* by Zoraida Cordova
- *We Are the Ants* by Shaun David Hutchinson
- *What Happened To Lani Garver* by Carol Plum-Ucci
- *What if it's Us* by Becky Albertalli
- *What is the Black Lives Matter Movement?* by Hedreich Nichols
- *What's Happening to My Body? Book for Girls* by Lynda Madaras
- *What's Happening to My Body? for Boys* by Lynda Madaras
- *When Religion & Politics Mix: How Matters of Faith Influence Political Policies* by Kenneth McIntosh
- *When the Moon Was Ours* by Anna-Marie McLemore
- *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Story of Black Lives Matter and the Power to Change the World* by Patrisse Khan-Cullors

- *Whistle Me Home* by Barbara Wersba
- *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by David Levithan, John Green
- *Willful Machines* by Tim Floreen
- *Y, the Last Man. Volume 1* by Brian K. Vaughan
- *You Are the Supreme Court Justice* by Nathan Aaseng
- *Zenobia July* by Lisa Bunker

**Reported in: WFAA, February 23, 2022, and April 18, 2022; Houston Chronicle, March 7, 2022.**

### Hanover County, Virginia

In a Facebook post, Cold Harbor District Supervisory Michael Herzberg referred to a Caldecott Medal honoree about the experiences of a Black child in America as “garbage” and called for the board of Hanover County Public Schools (HCPS) to remove it and others like it from their libraries.

The picture book Herzberg objected to is *A Place Inside of Me: A Poem to Heal the Heart* by Zetta Elliott. It explores a young Black boy’s emotions and experiences in response to a Black woman being shot and killed by police.

Numerous people criticized Herzberg for the post during the February 9 meeting of the Hanover County board of supervisors.

“Experiencing different ways of life and reading promotes empathy and social emotional growth,” said Dottie Walsh. She said banning books “creates a false sense of reality.”

“I purchased this book and I was moved by this book,” said Walsh, who is the daughter of a police officer. “This can help avoid the anger building up inside. It may save the life of oneself, others, and a police officer. Don’t you want that? It is where discussions are made and solutions can follow.”

On June 14, the HCPS board voted 4-3 to retain *A Place Inside of Me* in elementary school libraries. Prior to the board’s vote, it was reviewed by a school review committee and an HCPS instructional material review committee. Both committees formally recommended keeping the book.

One of the board members who voted against retaining the book was John Axselle. He said that he personally disagreed with the book’s inclusion of an image with a Black Lives Matter sign.

Axselle said he didn’t know of any parents in Hanover County who were killed by police. “So why am I going to ask [children] to read a book—or make a book available to them—so they can experience it? I don’t think that’s a very positive thing to experience.”

Peggy Lavinder told the board, “We can’t teach our students that books are something to fear.”

**Reported in: Richmond Times-Dispatch, February 11, 2022; Virginia Public Media, June 15, 2022.**

### Williamsburg, Virginia

On April 19, the board of Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools (WJCCPS) voted 4-3 against purchasing a new social studies textbook after residents voiced concerns it contained critical race theory.

*Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy, 2020 Presidential Election* was recommended for use as an Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. Government and Politics textbook by a committee consisting of a curriculum coordinator, teachers, specialists, parents, administrators, and a school board member.

The textbook was approved for use by the Virginia Department of Education. It is an updated version of a



textbook that has been used in AP courses previously in the district.

One speaker took issue with the book's cover. It features a photo of Black Lives Matter protesters in Washington, D.C., carrying signs which read "Silence is violence" and "Stop killing Black people." The speaker said the image indicated the book contains "divisive teachings."

Digital materials about the text were available for community review from February 18 through March 11. A public textbook adoption fair was held on March 10.

Division superintendent Olwen Herron said that the public review "process has been consistent over a number of years" and that additional time was allotted for review this year.

Board chair Greg Dowell and members Julie Hummel, Sandra Young, and Sarah Ortego opposed the purchase.

On May 3, the WJCCPS board reopened the vote during a work session in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education and the division's legal team. This time the board voted 4-3 to adopt the textbook.

Hummel, the board member who changed her vote, said that while she did not agree with the cover, she felt the content between the covers was appropriate for students.

**Reported in: *Williamsburg Yorktown Daily*, April 21, 2022; *The Virginia Gazette*, May 4, 2022.**

## Cedar Heights, Washington

On February 8, an individual with no affiliated students attending the Cedar Heights Middle School challenged a book held in its library.

The book was among those principal Erika Hanson removed from the library against Kent School District policy last December: *Jack of Hearts*

(and *Other Parts*) by L.C. Rosen, *If I Was Your Girl* by Meredith Russo, and *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson.

All three portray the lived experiences of individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+). They were recently returned to the collection before the outside request for reconsideration was submitted.

On February 9, the district decided to allow this new challenge to *Jack of Hearts* to proceed and that they would entertain requests for reconsideration from anyone residing in the district.

The book remained available for students while under review by the district's Instructional Materials Committee (IMC).

On March 3 it was reported that school librarian Gavin Downing, who has purposefully expanded the LGBTQIA+ titles available at the middle school, will require all future book orders to be approved.

The IMC voted 12-3 recommending the book's removal. The board was slated to vote on whether or not to retain the book during their June 8th meeting.

On June 6, ACLU-Washington and the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, the Washington Library Association, the Anti-Defamation League Pacific Northwest, and QLaw sent a letter to the district asserting that removing the book would be unconstitutional.

On June 8, the board voted to table their decision on the book in order to consider the potential legal action that may ensue if they were to ban it.

On June 29, the Kent School Board voted 2-1 to keep *Jack of Hearts* in their middle school libraries.

**Reported in: *Kent Reporter*, February 9, 2022, and February 16, 2022; *The Seattle Times* March**

**3, 2022; *KING5*, June 8, 2022, and June 29, 2022.**

## LIBRARIES Rochester, Michigan

From late December 2021 through January 27, challenges to ten titles held by the Rochester Hills Public Library were challenged by members of a Facebook group that also challenged titles at the Rochester Community Schools District (*see: this issue: Censorship Dateline: Schools: Rochester, Michigan*).

The titles they challenged were:

- *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson
- *Flamer* by Mike Curato
- *I'm a Wild Seed* by Sharon Lee De la Cruz
- *Jack of Hearts (and Other Parts)* by L.C. Rosen
- *Pink is for Boys* by Robb Pearlman
- *Prince and Knight* by Daniel Haack
- *Sex is a Funny Word* by Cory Silverberg
- *The Girl from the Sea* by Molly Ostertag
- *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess
- *The Magic Fish* by Trung Le Nguyen

All of the titles challenged at the Rochester Hills Public Library have lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) characters, themes, and/or authors. The reason for challenging the titles which was provided on the request for consideration form was "books should be wholesome."

On March 28, a parent who is not a resident of the Rochester Hills Public Library's service area, submitted an additional complaint about the graphic novel *Flamer* by Mike



Curato. He alleged the book was pornographic and went against his personal set of beliefs and practices.

The title was retained as the library does not entertain requests for reconsideration from non-residents by policy.

On April 11, an individual expressed concerns about the graphic novel *Sexuality: A Graphic Guide* by Meg-John Barker. She said she felt the content of the book was indecent and inappropriate for anyone to access.

As of the time of publication, all challenged titles remain available for circulation, many in both physical and electronic format, and shelved in their original locations. The only exception is Rosen's *Jack of Hearts (and Other Parts)*, though the reason it was removed from circulation is unknown.

**Reported in: Rochester Hills Public Library Board Minutes, February 7, 2022, April 11, 2022, May 9, 2022, and June 13, 2022;**

### **Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

#### **Glade Spring, Virginia**

On January 31, Washington County Commissioner of Revenue Mark Matney submitted a request for the reconsideration of Jonathan Evison's *Lawn Boy* as part of the Washington County Public Library's WCPL collection.

On the request he wrote that "children having sex does not belong in society." He indicated he did not read the book and was unable to cite any pages or passages that he objected to.

In February, the library formed a committee to review the challenged title in adherence with board-approved policy. They recommended that the library retain the book within its collections. On March 22, the library board upheld this recommendation in a 5-1 vote.

The lone dissenting vote came from Senah Matney, the commissioner's wife.

On April 12, at the Washington County Board of Supervisors meeting, Commissioner of Revenue Mark Matney again called for the removal of *Lawn Boy* from WCPL. Matney proclaimed that "anybody who likes this book is supporting child abuse."

*Lawn Boy* is a semi-autobiographical coming-of-age novel exploring themes of poverty, racism and sexual identity. It won a 2019 Alex Award, given by the Young Adult Library Services Association to adult books that have special appeal to young adults.

Library director Molly Schock said the book has been shelved in the adult fiction section since it was acquired in 2018.

**Reported in: *The Roanoke Times*, April 16, 2022.**