



# NEWS IN BRIEF

Some cases of censorship are only reported briefly via social media or board meeting minutes. When substantive media reporting regarding a challenge is lacking, the case will be reported here.

## Massachusetts

On July 13, nine libraries in Massachusetts received copies of a letter requesting reconsideration of *My Heart is on the Ground: The Diary of Nannie Little Rose, a Sioux Girl* by Ann Rinaldi. The letter cited concerns over stereotypes, misinformation, and historical inaccuracies.

The libraries which received the challenge are: Hopkinton Public Library, Boston Public Library, Milford Town Library-, Lawrence Library, Beaman Memorial Public Library-, Griswold Memorial Library-, Edwards Public Library, Sunderland Public Library, Conant Free Public Library.

The book is currently available from all libraries who received the letter other than the Milford Town Library and the Beaman Memorial Public Library. It is unclear if they never owned the title or if they withdrew it in response to the challenge.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

## Gila County, Arizona

On June 9, Payson Town Councilor Jim Ferris recommended that the town drop out of the Gila County Library District because they have the book *Sex is a Funny Word* by Cory Sivlerberg.

If the Pason Library left the county system, it would lose \$239,000 in county funding.

A request for the reconsideration of *Sex is a Funny Word* earlier in the year resulted in it and other sex education titles for children being moved out of the children's room and into a new collection of resources for parents shelved in the adult section. The titles of the books which were relocated without having been challenged are unknown.

**Reported in: Payson Roundup, June 14, 2022.**

## Alameda County, California

On June 11, the San Lorenzo branch of the Alameda County Library (ACL) held a Drag Queen Story Hour as part of their Pride Month programming. During the event, a group of five men wearing attire affiliated with the Proud Boys entered the library and yelled homophobic and transphobic slurs at the performer, who sought shelter. After the group left, the performer resumed the storytime.

The Alameda County Sheriff's Office opened a hate crimes investigation into the incident.

On July 2, ACL received a request for the reconsideration of the children's graphic novel *A Lucky Luke Adventure. 65, Ghost Hunt* by Lo Hartog Van Banda.

The patron objected to the book's use of derogatory terms for indigenous women and that native Americans in the book were illustrated with red skin.

The book was reviewed and the historic western series was relocated to the adult graphic novel section.

**Reported in: The Mercury News, June 12, 2022; Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

## Carlsbad, California

In May, a patron submitted a request for the Carlsbad City Library to reconsider *Ancient Tales and Folklore of China* by Edward Werner. The patron indicated that the 1922 title was outdated and contained offensive inaccuracies, including claims that Chinese people have "smaller brains" and are "servile."

The title was reviewed and withdrawn.

On May 25, a patron heatedly objected to the Pride display in the children's section of the Carlsbad City Library. The patron then submitted a

request for the reconsideration of *My Moms Love Me* by Anna Membrino. On the form, they wrote, "Enough with the propaganda."

The review committee voted unanimously to retain the title.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

## Solana Beach, California

A Solana Beach School District teacher requested a donation of K-6 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+)-affirming titles from Open Books. The donation was received, but some community parents objected when they learned about it on social media.

In response to the parents' complaints, the district prevented the books from being added to the library until they could all be reviewed by teachers.

On June 27, the board updated the district's policy on the selection and reconsideration of school library materials. The new policy grants parents the right to specify titles their children are not allowed to check out from school libraries. It also established a "professional bookshelf" in each library for books on sensitive topics. Books shelved on these require parental consent.

Titles challenged:

- *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell
- *Annie's Plaid Shirt* by Stacy Davids
- *From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea* by Kai Cheng Thom
- *I Am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings
- *It Feels Good To Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity* by Theresa Thorn
- *It's Okay to be Different* by Todd Parr
- *Julian is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love
- *Marisol McDonald and the Clash Bash* by Monica Brown



- *Melissa* (previously published as *George*) by Alex Gino
- *Neither* by Airlie Anderson
- *One of a Kind, Like Me* by Laurin Mayeno
- *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag* by Rob Sanders
- *Red: A Crayon's Story* by Michael Hall
- *Sparkle Boy* by Lesléa Newman
- *The Bravest Knight Who Ever Lived* by Daniel Errico
- *When Aidan Became a Brother* by Kyle Lukoff

It is unknown if the donated LGBTQIA+ titles were retained and if so, if they were added to the general collection or relegated to the “professional bookshelf.”

**Reported in:** *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, July 24, 2022.

### Sonoma County, California

On June 16, all of the books from the children’s, teen, and adult Pride Month display at a Sonoma County Library branch were checked out by a single patron. The individual also took all of the flyers with Pride Month reading lists. The individual’s actions follow those prescribed in CatholicVote’s “Hide the Pride” campaign (*see: this issue: For the Record: Nationwide*).

**Reported in:** *The Press Democrat*, June 24, 2022.

### Akron, Colorado

On June 9, a modest Pride Month display at the Akron Public Library that consisted solely of a rainbow flag in the teen section, became the subject of controversy.

That morning, a recently elected town council member came in and accused the librarian of using the library as a platform to promote “her personal religious LGBTQIA+ agenda.” The council member stated the flag was inappropriate unless other “religious” flags were also displayed.

He demanded proof in Akron city ordinance that displaying a Pride flag was allowed. The librarian reached out to the town clerk and attorney.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Cortez, Colorado

During the week of May 23, the Cortez Public Library began receiving phone calls from a group of individuals raising religious objections to a scheduled after-hours drag show celebrating Pride Month.

The group of “conservative patriots” held a prayer circle and referred to library and city staff as “pedophiles.”

It is unknown if the event took place.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Douglas County, Colorado

In April, a parent submitted a request for high school libraries in Douglas County Schools to reconsider *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah.

The 30 copies of the book in the district remain available for circulation.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Garfield County, Colorado

On June 9, a patron submitted a written complaint about the Pride displays located in all six branches of Garfield County Libraries.

In their letter, the patron stated that “being a active gay person is against the Bible” and that the displays are “celebrating something that is not normal and may be sinful.”

The library system informed the patron that they would keep the displays up throughout Pride month.

On June 20, a patron submitted a request for the reconsideration of *P is for Pterodactyl: The Worst Alphabet Book Ever: All the Letters that Misbehave and Make Words Nearly Impossible to*

*Pronounce* by Raj Haldar. They believed that the book’s references to ouija boards and psychics made it inappropriate for children.

The reconsideration committee recommended relocating the book from the Easy Reader section to children’s non-fiction, since the abecedary’s focus was on words that are difficult to read.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Cheshire, Connecticut

On June 17, a patron checked out every book that was included in a Pride display in the children’s section of the Cheshire Public Library. This method of censoring library displays was advocated for in CatholicVote in an campaign they called “Hide the Pride” which aimed to “empty libraries of LGBTQ content aimed at kids.”

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Coventry, Connecticut

On June 22, a woman carried all the books included as part of the Pride display in the children’s section at the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library to the front desk and demanded that they be burned. The woman claimed she represented a group of like-minded mothers.

Library director Margaret Khan informed her of the library’s collection development policy and their policy regarding the reconsideration of materials. Khan indicated that submitting a reconsideration request form was the only proper means of challenging library materials.

Town manager John Elsesser advised library staff to call the police if a similar incident occurs.

**Reported in:** *Journal Inquirer*, July 6, 2022.



### Newtown, Connecticut

On June 16 a patron of the Cyrenius H. Booth Library emailed a complaint regarding the Pride display in the children's section and the decision for the library to circulate children's books about the lives and experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people.

The patron indicated that she homeschooled her four children and that it felt like they were "under assault by sexualized materials" when she came into the library. She also indicated that she represented a larger group who would boycott the library if the displays and books were not removed.

On June 23, the library director met with the patron and explained their collection and display policies. They reached a shared understanding around the presence of LGBTQIA+ materials in the library.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Niantic, Connecticut

On May 27, the East Lyme Public Library received a request to reconsider *The Final Girl Support Group* by Grady Hendrix.

The library retained the fictional title about a support group for the survivors of horror-movie style massacres.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Dade County, Florida

On July 20, Miami-Dade County School District board members voted 5-4 to bar use of two health textbooks in middle and high schools.

The board's vote was prompted by the group County Citizens Defending Freedom's objections to the textbooks' inclusion of information on abortion, contraception, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

The board had previously approved *Comprehensive Health Skills and Comprehensive Health Skills for Middle School* for use. Board member Lucia Baez-Geller said the books follow Florida's standards for reproductive health and that pulling them was detrimental to students.

United Teachers of Dade released a statement, saying the teachers union was "disturbed by the continued attempt[s] from extremist groups to censor books."

**Reported in: Local 10 News, July 20, 2022.**

### Hernando County, Florida

On May 6, the Hernando County Public Library System received a request to reconsider *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson.

The request came from Kara Floyd, a Moms for Liberty member who applied for a seat on the Library Advisory Committee earlier in the year, but was not selected. Floyd's husband is running for the library board.

Floyd contended that the book violated Florida Statute 847.013, the criminal law governing "exposing minors to harmful motion pictures, exhibitions, shows, presentations, or representations."

The title was withdrawn from the library system.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Monroe County, Florida

On May 31, a patron of the Monroe County Public Library System submitted a formal request for the reconsideration of *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess, claiming the picture book was abusive, predatory and sexually exploitative.

A committee of five librarians read and researched the book. When they met to discuss it, they voted

unanimously to retain the book where it was shelved in their Easy Reader collection.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### St. Johns County, Florida

On June 15, Debra Gibson, director of St. Johns County Public Library System, ordered the removal of all Pride Month displays from all six library locations. The directive came after County Administrator Hunter Conrad complained about the displays' existence. No formal review process was followed.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### West Palm Beach, Florida

In March, a parent at the Palm Beach County Library System challenged *If I Ran the Zoo* by Dr. Seuss over racist imagery.

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Canton, Georgia

In March, the Sequoyah Regional Library System received a formal request for the reconsideration of *Boy: Poems* by Patrick Phillips due to LGBTQIA+ content.

The library reviewed the title and retained it in the adult non-fiction section where it was originally cataloged.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Carrollton, Georgia

In mid-April, a man who did not have a library card came to the Dog River location of the West Georgia Regional Library System and requested assistance locating *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe. When given the book, he flipped to a specific page and voiced objections to the material. The library manager visited with him and provided



a copy of their materials reconsideration form.

The man did not submit the reconsideration request form, but did attend the May 10 board meeting. During the public comments section, he quoted Bible verses, claimed that *Gender Queer* was pornographic and illegal in Georgia, and stated that homosexuality is a sin.

The library system retained the book in the Young Adult sections of the libraries that own it.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Clayton County, Georgia

On June 3, a student at Clayton County Public Schools reported that *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas was removed from their school library because the book “criticized police” and was “divisive.”

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Walker County, Georgia

During the public comments section of their June 20 meeting, Jenn Smeiles, a mother who is homeschooling her three children, lambasted the Walker County School District board over five school library books she believes are inappropriate.

Smeiles specifically objected to the depiction of “explicit sexual activities, explicit violence, inflammatory racial commentary, homosexuality, excessive drug and alcohol use, and radical activist ideology.” Two of the titles she spoke about weren’t held in any of their school libraries.

Superintendent Damon Raines stated the board and staff would review the books objected to during the meeting. “Anytime somebody from the community comes to us with a concern, we’re going to address it,” Raines said.

After the meeting, Smeiles visited with other parents and encouraged

them to get involved. Board member Karen Harden texted Smeiles to thank her for reaching out about the books.

The titles challenged were:

- *Slaughterhouse-Five, or, the Children’s Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death* by Kurt Vonnegut—not held
- *Sold* by Patricia McCormick
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie—not held
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins

It is unknown if the three titles held in district libraries were retained, relocated, or withdrawn.

**Reported in: WDEF, June 20, 2022; Chattanooga Times Free Press, June 26, 2022.**

### Algonquin, Illinois

On June 11, an individual raised objections on Facebook to a teen book discussion about *Flamer* by Mike Curato that was taking place at the Algonquin Area Public Library. The complainant said that parents of those attending needed to be warned about the book’s content.

The book discussion proceeded as originally scheduled and the graphic novel was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Alpha Park, Illinois

On April 27 a parent in the Alpha Park Public Library District requested reconsideration of *Helping Our World Get Well: COVID Vaccines* by Beth Bacon and Kary Lee citing concerns that the book had a pro-vaccination bias.

The book was reviewed and retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Lombard, Illinois

On May 18 a patron called the Helen M. Plum Memorial Public Library District to ask if they planned on having another “sexuality in June” display in the children’s department like they did last year. She asserted that it was inappropriate to display books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) characters.

The librarian informed the patron that it was a Pride Month display and that the library would continue to have them.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Oswego, Illinois

On May 6, teachers at the Oswego Community Unit School District 308 were sent an email informing them that *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee would no longer be taught.

During a meeting held on May 11, staff were informed the decision to update the curriculum was led by Jadon Waller, the district’s director of diversity and inclusion.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Roselle, Illinois

On June 22, the Roselle Public Library District received a request for the reconsideration of the DVD *Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer*.

The documentary was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Schaumburg, Illinois

On June 8, the library board of the Schaumburg Township District Library received a letter following the template in CatholicVote’s “Hide the Pride” campaign objecting to the library’s Pride Month display and all of the books included (*see: this issue: For the Record: Nationwide*).



The library kept the display up throughout June.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Wheeling, Illinois

On June 14, a patron challenged the book *'Twas the Night Before Pride* by Joanna McClintick at the Indian Trails Public Library District.

The title was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Allen, Indiana

During their April 25 board meeting, Northwest Allen County Schools tabled a vote to approve four math textbooks. Board member Kent Somers expressed concerns they may contain word problems with “inappropriate content” such as interracial marriage.

Somers’s concerns echo those raised earlier in the month surrounding math textbooks in Florida (*see: Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.7 iss.2: For the Record: Florida*).

On May 9, the board approved three of the textbooks. On May 23, the final contested math textbook was approved. The titles of the textbooks in question were not reported or included in the board minutes.

**Reported in: WBOI, May 10, 2022; Northwest Allen County Schools Regular Board Meeting Minutes, May 23, 2022.**

### Indianapolis, Indiana

On May 16, a patron at the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library (IMCPL) requested the reconsideration of *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess.

The grandparent who filed the challenge wrote that “the library is not the place for political and social justice” and “grooming of children for this lifestyle is disgusting.”

The review committee voted unanimously to retain the title.

On June 8, an IMCPL patron submitted a request for the reconsideration of *Love in the Wild* by Katy Tanis, claiming that “it depicts homosexual animals in love . . . to groom children into homosexuality.”

The review committee voted unanimously to retain this title, as well.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Jennings County, Indiana

Between June 6 and June 10, a patron and members of the Promise Keepers challenged the Pride Month display at Jennings County Public Library. In addition to submitting complaints to the library, they registered complaints with the mayor and the county commissioners.

Approximately 60 members of the public also spoke out against the display during the public comments section of the June 8 library board meeting.

The board held a special meeting on June 14 to discuss the display. They approved a policy allowing the reconsideration of library displays by a 5-0 vote. The board also directed rainbow flags and other signage to be removed from the display, but allowed the books to remain as part of it.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report; *The Tribune*, June 17, 2022.**

### Lake County, Indiana

On June 16, a patron of the Lake County Public Library challenged the book *Trans: When Ideology Meets Reality* by Helen Joyce, asserting that it is “meant to provide a faux intellectual framework to harass trans folk” and was a “call for genocide” of transgender people. He said it was particularly offensive that it was on display during Pride Month.

The book was retained. In their June 18 response letter to the patron, they indicated that the book was displayed on the new book shelf due to its date of purchase

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Davenport, Iowa

On May 27, the Davenport Public Library began receiving objections to a planned Pride month program for teens called “Teen Summer Brunch: Drag Queens and Kings.”

Complaints were received from individuals nationwide, as the event was covered by the controversial homophobic and anti-transgender Twitter account Libs of TikTok. Chaya Raichik, who owns the account, has used it to popularize the term “grooming” as a pejorative for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) individuals.

The program was held on June 27. Approximately 40 protesters showed up that day.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Creston, Iowa

The Matilda J. Gibson Memorial Library received numerous letters complaining about their Pride month display between June 1 and June 18. The library also received complaints about the display through an online survey that is part of their strategic planning process.

The Pride display remained up throughout June.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### DeWitt, Iowa

On June 13, Jason Tharp’s book *It’s Okay to be a Unicorn!* was stolen from a series of kiosks in Westbrook Park, where it was used on a storywalk—a way



for people to read a book page by page as they walk along a trail.

The book was removed the day before staff of the DeWitt Community Library were to lead community members along the storywalk as part of their summer programming.

DeWitt Parks and Recreation Director Kevil Lake notified the police about the theft of the library material.

Library director Janette McMahon said the storywalk will be restored soon. The book remains available from the library for circulation.

**Reported in:** *Clinton Herald*, June 22, 2022.

### Concordia, Kansas

On June 3, the Frank Carlson Library received a request to reconsider the book *A Whale of a Tea Party* by Erica S. Perl due to a snail's use of they/them pronouns.

The book was retained.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Garnett, Kansas

In the spring, the Principal of Garnett Elementary School in the Unified School District 365 removed *Stamped (for Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi "for review."

The principal never returned the book.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Johnson County, Kansas

On April 20, a patron of the Johnson County Library formally requested the relocation of *The Summer of Owen Todd* by Tony Abbott from the children's section to the teen section. They expressed their belief that childhood sexual abuse was too heavy of a topic for children to learn about.

The library retained the title where it was originally shelved.

**Reported in:** Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Newton, Kansas

After the board of Newton Public Schools USD 373 approved the purchase of 34 teacher-requested titles for school libraries, superintendent Fred Van Ranken said the district's screening process for objectionable content isn't strong enough and that parents should be involved in the selection of library materials.

Van Ranken said the novels the board approved contained content the board should not have approved, including language, sexual content, violence, drugs and alcohol, mature themes, and religious/political themes.

A book review panel is being convened to evaluate the books that were challenged by Van Ranken before any student could read them.

The titles undergoing review are:

- *A Woman is no Man* by Etaf Rum
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely
- *Allegedly* by Tiffany Jackson
- *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone
- *Don't Ask Me Where I'm From* by Jennifer De Leon
- *Educated* by Tara Westover
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick
- *George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides* by Rosalyn Schanzer
- *Ghost* by Jason Reynolds
- *Holes* by Louis Sachar
- *Home Fire* by Kamila Shamsie
- *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi
- *I am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika Sanchez
- *Kindred* by Octavia E. Butler
- *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng
- *Malala: My Story of Standing Up for Girls Rights* by Malala Yousafzai
- *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro

- *Not So Pure and Simple* by Lamar Giles
- *News of the World* by Paulette Jiles
- *One Dark Night* by Lisa Wheeler
- *Paul Revere's Ride: The Landlord's Tale* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *The Book of Unknown Americans* by Cristina Henriquez
- *The Girl with Seven Names: Escape from North Korea* by Hyeonseo Lee
- *The Girl with the Louding Voice* by Abi Daré
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *There There* by Tommy Orange
- *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt
- *Ungifted* by Gordon Korman
- *Weslandia* by Paul Fleischman

**Reported in:** *Wichita Eagle*, May 11, 2022.

### Oakley, Kansas

On April 27, a patron of the Oakley Public Library submitted a request for the reconsideration of *Fred Gets Dressed* by Peter Brown. She expressed concerns that the picture book included what she viewed to be "LGBTQ content."

On May 25, the board voted unanimously to retain the book.

**Reported in:** *Kansas Reflector*, May 10, 2022, and May 26, 2022.

### Pittsburg, Kansas

On June 13, the board and director of the Pittsburg Public Library received an emailed complaint regarding their Pride Month display in the Young Adult section of the library. The display was created by the library's teen volunteer group, the "Volunteens." The complaint used language from CatholicVote's "Hide the Pride" template.



The director issued a board-approved response, affirming the library's commitment to the freedom to read and the Library Bill of Rights and stated that "the library represents the entire community—and that includes LGBTQ individuals."

On June 21, 22, and 30 both the director and assistant director received complaints using similar language to the email they library received.

A discussion of the incidents was scheduled to take place during their August 10 board meeting.

(See: *this issue: For the Record: Nationwide*).

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Pulaski County, Kentucky

On June 9, a display in the Pulaski County Public Library created by a librarian and the Lake Cumberland Diversity Council commemorating the Federal holiday Juneteenth was taken down. The display's removal occurred just days before the community's Juneteenth Jubilee.

The adult programming librarian who collaborated on the display left their position with the library on June 10.

Library director Charlotte Keeney said she took the display down because it did not follow the library's display policy, which did not allow "sponsored" displays. She said she has received "a ton of calls" in the wake of the display's removal.

**Reported in: Commonwealth Journal, June 15, 2022.**

### Scott County, Kentucky

On June 23, a patron of the Scout County Public Library submitted a request for the reconsideration of *Big Nate: From the Top* by Lincoln Pierce, which she said was sexist and contained innuendos. She asked that the book be moved to the adult section and

suggested placing a large warning label on the cover and a disclaimer in the catalog record.

The comic strips included in the book were previously published serially in the comics sections of newspapers.

The library retained the book in the children's section.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Beauregard, Louisiana

On June 1, a grandparent submitted a request for the Beauregard Parish Library to reconsider *Sewing the Rainbow: A Story About Gilbert Baker and the Rainbow Flag* by Gayle Pitman.

The non-fiction picture book intended for 4 to 8 year olds is about the creation of the rainbow flag and how it's okay to be yourself.

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Covington, Louisiana

On June 14, a councilperson threatened to slash the budget of the St. Tammany Parish Library (STPL) due to a Pride Month display in the adult section of the Mandeville branch.

In the following days, STPL received additional written complaints about their Pride Month displays, as well as angry phone calls, emails, and Facebook posts.

Formal complaints against the displays were submitted by a parish councilperson, two Mandeville residents, and the God's Remedy for America Evangelism Ministry.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Union, Maine

During the public comments section of the May 5 Regional School Unit 40 board meeting, community members voiced objections to the inclusion of *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe

and *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison in the Medomak Valley High School library.

Superintendent Steve Nolan said that the books had already been formally challenged in October 2021, reviewed in accordance with district policy, and retained based on the committee's recommendations. One board member spoke out against this past decision.

Steve Karp led the objections to the books' depictions of the lived experience of gay and non-binary people during the meeting. He called the books pornographic and said that giving them to minors was "the definition of grooming."

Bill Moody asked if the district was working for the devil.

The board opted to reconsider their prior reconsideration of *Gender Queer*. On October 20, they once again voted to retain it in the high school library.

**Reported in: Courier-Gazette, May 6, 2022; Bangor Daily News, October 21, 2022.**

### Montgomery County, Maryland

On June 25, four protesters showed up to a 3:00 p.m. Drag Queen Story Hour hosted by Montgomery County Public Libraries as part of the week-long "Pride in the Plaza" celebration.

The protesters repeatedly disrupted the storytime by shouting comments about pedophilia and asking the performer questions like "How does it feel to know you offend God?"

Library director Anita Vassallo told them they needed to leave and ushered them to the exit. A senior librarian called security. Two of the protesters filmed the security response and continued shouting comments as they were escorted from the premises.

Afterwards, a larger protest organized by a religious group was held outside of the library. A neighbor called



in a noise complaint to the police. The protesters disbanded around 4:45 p.m.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Prince George's County, Maryland

On July 11, a patron of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System challenged the book *Jerusalem's Queen: A Novel of Salome Alexandra* by Angela Elwell Hunt, claiming it was "highly sacrilegious."

Library staff reviewed the title and it was retained as part of the collection.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### St. Mary's County, Maryland

During the public comments section of their May 25 meeting, a resident of California addressed the board of St. Mary's County Public Schools about "LGBTQ propaganda" and "Black Lives Matter posters."

The out-of-state resident also stated that the portrayal of a homosexual relationship in the book *The Thing About Jellyfish* by Ali Benjamin "robbed me and my son of his innocence." She also stated that a similar thing happened to her daughter.

The outcome of this challenge is unknown.

On June 14, St. Mary's County Library received a request for the reconsideration of *Who Are You? The Kid's Guide to Gender Identity* by Brook Pessin-Whedbee. The patron who challenged the book stated that confusion around gender is destroying the lives of children and parents.

The book was reviewed by a committee and retained in the library.

Reported in: *Southern Maryland News*, May 31, 2022.

### Braintree, Massachusetts

On June 7, Rayla Campbell, a candidate for Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, challenged the book *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe at the Thayer Public Library. After speaking with the librarian, Campbell went on Facebook Live to describe the graphic novel and complain about "libraries using tax payer dollars to purchase pornography."

The library retained the graphic novel.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Lunenburg, Massachusetts

In December, a patron of the Lunenburg Public Library requested the reconsideration of *Determined to Stay: Palestinian Youth Fight for their Village* by Jody Sokolower because they felt it misrepresented Jewish history.

The title was retained.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Springfield, Massachusetts

On June 9, a librarian at the Springfield City Library found *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* by Nikole Hannah-Jones hidden behind shelved books in a disparate section of the library from where it belongs. It was returned to the proper shelf.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Tyngsborough, Massachusetts

On May 17, the Tyngsborough Public Library received a written challenge to an upcoming Tarot for Teens and Tweens Program. The complainant stated that "tarot and other occult spiritual practices are potentially dangerous and not for children." They recommended the library host "wholesome" programs instead.

The program was held as scheduled.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Big Rapids, Michigan

On June 4, a patron of the Big Rapids Community Library emailed director Lauren Perkins to complain about the Pride Display in the children's section. The complaint asserted that "issues of sexuality are very controversial" and therefore "not appropriate topics for young children."

Perkins defended the display, provided information about the library's reconsideration policy along with the form to request reconsideration of titles.

On July 19, the patron submitted requests for the reconsideration of five books from the display.

The library retained all titles in the children's section.

Titles challenged:

- *Being You: A First Conversation About Gender* by Megan Madison
- *I'm Not a Girl: A Transgender Story* by Maddox Lyons
- *Jacob's Room to Choose* by Sarah Hoffman
- *Pink, Blue, and You! Questions for Kids About Gender Stereotypes* by Elise Gravel
- *The Rainbow Parade* by Emily Neilson

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

### Canton, Michigan

On April 6, a patron of the Canton Public Library requested reconsideration of two books shelved in the parenting section: *My Vulva* by Courtney Angermeier and *Can I Have Babies Too?: Sexuality and Relationships Education for Children from Infancy up to Age 11* by Sanderijn van der Doef.



On the reconsideration forms, the grandparent characterized the books as traumatizing and pornographic.

The books were retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

### Grandville, Michigan

In May, the Grand View Elementary School principal informed the school librarian that a group called Grandville Parents for Education (GPFE) had submitted complaints about four titles in the collection. All of the titles contain main characters who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+).

According to their website, GPFE supports “traditional values” and is opposed to the teaching of critical race theory; the display of Black Lives Matters and rainbow Pride flags; the use of school property to host LGBTQIA+ student groups or clubs; LGBTQIA+ library books; the implementation of a gender neutral bathroom policy; Marxism; and social emotional learning.

GPFE created a form on their website to help automate the book complaint process. Their members have publicly shared resources from Moms for Liberty and Book Looks on social media. .

These are the titles they challenged in May, all of which were withdrawn:

- *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell
- *I am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings
- *Melissa* (previously published as *George*) by Alex Gino
- *Rick* by Alex Gino

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Hancock, Michigan

On June 8, the superintendent of Hancock School District ordered the head

librarian of the Hancock School Public Library (HSPL) to take down their Pride display. HSPL is a public library that is physically located within the high school through a contract between the Portage Lake District Library (PLDL) system and the school district.

The library’s contract does not give them control over displays and the library does not have a display policy.

The director of PLDL met with the superintendent and HSPL’s head librarian to discuss the issue. The superintendent insisted that any display which offended patrons should be taken down. He agreed to a compromise where the books could be displayed on easels in the sections of the library where they are normally shelved. The original display was left empty.

On June 10, the superintendent requested that the display space be used for a different display or for the shelving to be removed entirely. The library chose to remove the shelves.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

### Saginaw, Michigan

On May 9, the middle and high school principals for the Swan Valley School District received an email from a parent requesting the removal of 201 titles from school libraries and providing links to YouTube videos of people protesting the books during the board meetings of other school districts.

In her email, she claimed the books were inappropriate because they contained profanity, pornography, critical race theory, and/or characters who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+).

The complainant was informed of the district’s policies governing the reconsideration of instructional and library material. She addressed the board about the books during the

public comments section of their May 19 meeting.

The spreadsheet of books challenged indicated which school libraries held them. While the outcome of the challenges was not reported, it is clear by searching the online catalogs that at least some of the titles were removed.

Books challenged in this case:

- *101 Ways to Dance* by Kathy Stinson
- *33 Snowfish* by Adam Rapp
- *A Court of Frost and Starlight* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Court of Silver Flames* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Court of Wings and Ruin* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo* by Jill Twiss
- *A House for Everyone: A Story to Help Children Learn About Gender Identity and Gender Expression* by Jo Hirst
- *A Prayer for Vengeance* by John Stafford
- *Adam* by Ariel Schrag
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely
- *All Boys Aren’t Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson
- *Allegedly* by Tiffany Jackson
- *Almost Perfect* by Brian Katcher
- *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell
- *Another Day* by David Levithan
- *AntiRacist Baby* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *Ask Me How I Got Here* by Christine Heppermann
- *Autoboyography* by Christina Lauren
- *Beautiful* by Amy Reed
- *Beetle & The Hollowbones* by Aliza Layne
- *Beloved* by Toni Morrison
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin



- *Beyond the Gender Binary* by Alok Vaid-Menon
- *Blankets: An Illustrated Novel* by Craig Thompson
- *Blue Is the Warmest Color* by Julie Maroh
- *Boy Girl Boy* by Ronald Koertge
- *Breathless* by Jennifer Niven
- *Call Me By Your Name* by André Aciman
- *Call Me Max* by Kyle Lukoff
- *Check, Please! #hockey* by Ngozi Ukazu
- *Cheer Up: Love and Pompoms* by Crystal Frasier
- *City of Heavenly Fire* by Cassandra Clare
- *Clockwork Princess* by Cassandra Clare
- *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Damsel* by Elana K. Arnold
- *Daughters Unto Devils* by Amy Lukavics
- *Dead End* by Jason Myers
- *Deogratias, a Tale of Rwanda* by Jean-Philippe Stassen
- *Doing It! Let's Talk About Sex* by Hannah Witton
- *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier
- *Dreaming in Cuban* by Cristina Garcia
- *Dumplin': Go Big or Go Home* by Julie Murphy
- *Eleanor & Park* by Rainbow Rowell
- *Emergency Contact* by Mary H.K. Choi
- *Empire of Storms (Throne of Glass 5)* by Sarah J. Maas
- *Exit Here* by Jason Myers
- *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer
- *Fade* by Lisa McMann
- *Fallout* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Felix Ever After* by Kacen Callender
- *Feral Sins* by Suzanne Wright
- *Fifteen Hundreds Miles from the Sun* by Jonny Garza Villa
- *Flamer* by Mike Curato
- *Fly on the Wall: How One Girl Saw Everything* by E. Lockhart
- *Forever* by Judy Blume
- *Forever for a Year* by B.T. Gottfred
- *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* by Alison Bechdel
- *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces* by Isabel Quintero
- *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe
- *Georgia Peaches and Other Forbidden Fruit* by Jaye Robin Brown
- *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes
- *Girl in Pieces* by Kathleen Glasgow
- *Graceling* by Kristin Cashore
- *Grl2grl: Short Fictions* by Julie Anne Peters
- *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi
- *House of Earth and Blood* by Sarah J. Maas
- *How Can I Be an Ally? (Racial Justice Today)* by Fatima ElMekki
- *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *I Am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings
- *I am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika Sanchez
- *I Need a New Butt!* by Dawn McMillan
- *I Never* by Laura Hopper
- *Identical* by Ellen Hopkins
- *I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson
- *I'm not a Girl: A Transgender Story* by Maddox Lyons
- *Impulse* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Infandous* by Elana K. Arnold
- *Introducing Teddy: a Gentle Story About Gender and Friendship* by Jessica Walton
- *It Feels Good To Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity* by Theresa Thorn
- *It's Not the Stork!: a Book about Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families, and Friends* by Robie H. Harris
- *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie H. Harris
- *Jack (Not Jackie)* by Erica Silverman
- *Jack of Hearts (and Other Parts)* by L.C. Rosen
- *Jay's Gay Agenda* by Jason June
- *Jesus Land: A Memoir* by Julia Scheeres
- *Julian is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love
- *Juliet Takes a Breath* by Gabby Rivera
- *Juliet Takes a Breath: Graphic Novel Adaptation* by Gabby Rivera
- *Kiss Number 8* by Colleen AF Venable and Ellen T. Crenshaw
- *L8r, G8r* by Lauren Myracle
- *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* by Malinda Lo
- *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison
- *Leah On the Offbeat* by Becky Albertalli
- *Lexicon* by Max Barry
- *Living Dead Girl* by Elizabeth Scott
- *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov
- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
- *Lucky* by Alice Sebold
- *Marriage of a Thousand Lies* by S.J. Sindu
- *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews
- *Melissa* (previously published as *George*) by Alex Gino
- *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur
- *Monday's Not Coming* by Tiffany Jackson
- *My Friend Dahmer* by Derf Backderf
- *My Princess Boy* by Cheryl Kilodavis
- *Neanderthal Opens the Door to the Universe* by Preston Norton
- *Nineteen Minutes* by Jodi Picoult
- *None of the Above* by I.W. Gregorio
- *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness* by Anastasia Higginbotham
- *Not Otherwise Specified* by Hannah Moskowitz
- *Odd One Out* by Nic Stone
- *One Man Guy* by Michael Barakiva
- *One of Us is Lying* by Karen McManus
- *Our Own Private Universe* by Robin Talley
- *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- *People Kill People* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Perfect* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Perfectly Good White Boy* by Carrie Mesrobian



- *Prince and the Dressmaker* by Jen Wang
- *Push* by Sapphire
- *Queer: A Graphic History* by Meg-John Barker
- *Queer: The Ultimate LGBTQ Guide for Teens* by Kathy Belge
- *Race Cars: A Children's Book About White Privilege* by Jenny Devenny
- *Racial Justice in America* by Hedreich Nichols
- *Rainbow Boys* by Alex Sanchez
- *Rainbow High* by Alex Sanchez
- *Real Live Boyfriends: Yes. Boyfriends, Plural. If My Life Weren't Complicated, I Wouldn't be* Ruby Oliver by E. Lockhart
- *Red at the Bone* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *Red Hood* by Elana K. Arnold
- *Rethinking Normal: A Memoir in Transition* by Katie Rain Hill
- *Rick* by Alex Gino
- *S.E.X.: The All-You-Need-to-Know Sexuality Guide to Get You Through Your Teens and Twenties* by Heather Corinna
- *Scars* by C.A. Rainfield
- *Sex is a Funny Word* by Cory Silverberg
- *Sex Plus: Learning, Loving, and Enjoying Your Body* by Laci Green
- *Sex: A Book for Teens: An Uncensored Guide to Your Body, Sex, and Safety* by Nikol Hasler
- *Shine* by Lauren Myracle
- *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* by Becky Albertalli
- *Slaughterhouse-Five, or, the Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death* by Kurt Vonnegut
- *Sold* by Patricia McCormick
- *Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice* by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, Ann Hazzard, and Jennifer Zivion
- *Sparkle Boy* by Lesléa Newman
- *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Stamped (For Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Sonja Cherry-Paul, Ibram X. Kendi, and Jason Reynolds
- *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
- *Symptoms of Being Human* by Jeff Garvin
- *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* by Nikole Hannah-Jones
- *The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives* by Dashka Slater
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein
- *The Assassin and the Empire* by Sarah J. Maas
- *The Berlin Boxing Club* by Rob Sharenow
- *The Best Laid Plans* by Cameron Lund
- *The Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta
- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- *The Breakaways* by Cathy G. Johnson
- *The Carnival at Bray* by Jessie Ann Foley
- *The Detour* by S.A. Bodeen
- *The DUFF: Designated Ugly Fat Friend* by Kody Keplinger
- *The GayBCs* by M.L. Webb
- *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky* by Heidi W Durrow
- *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- *The Handsome Girl & Her Beautiful Boy* by B.T. Gottfred
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- *The Haters* by Jesse Andrews
- *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *The Infinite Moment of Us* by Lauren Myracle
- *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* by Victoria Schwab
- *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini
- *The Music of What Happens* by Bill Konigsberg
- *The Nerdy and the Dirty* by B.T. Gottfred
- *The Nowhere Girls* by Amy Reed
- *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky
- *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo
- *The Realm of Possibility* by David Levithan
- *The Truth about Alice* by Jennifer Mathieu
- *The Upside of Unrequited* by Becky Albertalli
- *The V-Word: True Stories About First-Time Sex* by Amber J. Keyser
- *They, She, He, Me. Free to Be* by Maya Christina Gonzalez
- *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher
- *This Book is Anti-Racist* by Tiffany Jewell
- *This Book is Gay* by Juno Dawson
- *This Day in June* by Gayle Pitman
- *Tilt* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Triangles* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins
- *TTYL (Talk to You Later)* by Lauren Myracle
- *Two Boys Kissing* by David Levithan
- *Vampire Academy* by Richelle Mead
- *Violin Maker's Daughter* by Sharon Maas
- *Wait, What? A Comic Book Guide to Relationships, Bodies, and Growing Up* by Heather Corinna
- *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen
- *What Girls Are Made Of* by Elana K. Arnold
- *What is White Privilege? (Racial Justice Today)* by Leigh Ann Erickson
- *When I Was the Greatest* by Jason Reynolds
- *Yolk* by Mary H.K. Choi
- *YOLO* by Lauren Myracle
- *You: A Novel* by Caroline Kepnes

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### **Anoka County, Minnesota**

On May 4, a patron of the Anoka County Library requested



reconsideration of the DVD *Catherine the Great*. They expressed concerns that the film contains sex but bore no labeling indicating that this was so.

The reconsiderations committee voted unanimously to retain it as shelved and unmodified. The management team endorsed this decision.

On June 9, an email following the CatholicVote “Hide the Pride” template was sent to the director of the Anoka County Library system. The email bore the signatures of 14 community members and demanded the immediate removal of the library system’s Pride Month displays.

The director thanked the 14 signatories on the email and shared the library’s reconsideration policies and form with them. She also shared the email with the board.

The displays were kept up.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Hennepin County, Minnesota

Mercer Mayer’s *Just a Special Thanksgiving* was challenged at the Hennepin County Library for inaccurate and stereotypical portrayals of indigenous people.

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Cass County, Missouri

On June 23, the wife of a local pastor requested that the Cass County Public Library reconsider the book *Spike: The Penguin with Rainbow Hair* by Sarah Cullen when it was read during a story time.

The patron alleged the picture book about a penguin’s struggles to fit in and learning to love yourself was “LGBT indoctrination.”

The title was withdrawn.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Columbia, Missouri

On May 13, a patron requested that the Daniel Boone Regional Library remove every book they held by Dinesh D’Souza.

The library retained all challenged titles.

- *America: Imagine a World Without Her* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *Death of a Nation: Plantation Politics and the Making of the Democratic Party* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *Godforsaken: Bad Things Happen, is There a God Who Cares? Yes, Here’s Proof* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *Hillary’s America: The Secret History of the Democratic Party* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *Life After Death: The Evidence* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *Obama’s America: Unmaking the American Dream* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *Stealing America: What My Experience with Criminal Gangs Taught Me About Obama, Hillary, and the Democratic Party* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *The Big Lie: Exposing the Nazi Roots of the American Left* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *The Enemy at Home: The Cultural Left and its Responsibility for 9/11* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *The Roots of Obama’s Rage* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *United States of Socialism: Who’s Behind it. Why it’s Evil. How to Stop It.* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *What’s so Great About America* by Dinesh D’Souza
- *What’s so Great About Christianity* by Dinesh D’Souza

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Grain Valley, Missouri

On April 25, Grain Valley Schools sent a letter to staff and parents that staff are no longer allowed to display cards or stickers indicating that their

classroom is a safe space for individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+).

The letter indicated that the school board made the decision after receiving a complaint that there were indicators of LGBTQIA+ safe spaces in some classrooms.

A gathering of demonstrators formed at the school in protest of the announcement the afternoon it was made. Grain Valley High School senior Kaylee Butler said, “I just want to come out here today and show LGBTQ kids that I’m standing with them, I’m protesting with them, I’m there for them.”

**Reported in: KSHB, April 25, 2022; USA Today, April 28, 2022.**

### Independence, Missouri

In April, a parent submitted a request for the Independence School District to reconsider *Cats vs. Robots: This is War* by Margaret Stohl. They were reading the book with their child and submitted the request after they learned it included a non-binary character.

A reconsideration committee was formed. They recommended withdrawing the title.

At their June 14 meeting, the school board voted to approve the committee’s recommendation and ban the book from district school libraries.

**Reported in: KCUR, June 17, 2022.**

### Richmond Heights, Missouri

In April, a patron submitted a formal request for the Richmond Heights Memorial Library to either withdraw the book *Outrageously Alice* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor from their collection, label it to indicate that it contains “mature content,” or reclassify it as a young adult title.

The book was reviewed, retained, and kept in the collection it was originally cataloged for without a label.



**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Stone County, Missouri

On June 20, staff of the Stone County Library received requests for the reconsideration of *I'm an Activist* by Will Mara, *Pride Puppy* by Robin Stevenson, and *They Love, We Love* by Sarah Kate Smigiel.

The books were reviewed and retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Missoula County, Montana

On October 18, 2021, the mother of a 5th grade Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) student registered a complaint about *When You Trap a Tiger* by Tae Keller.

The magical tale about Korean folklore coming to life was read aloud to students. The parent believed it was inappropriate for her daughter to hear a story that included characters who were in a same-sex relationship.

On December 9, 2021, the mother of an MCPS kindergarten student met with the principal and school librarian to discuss her challenge to the book *Ogilvy* by Deb Underwood, which her son had checked out from the library.

The parent expressed her belief that it was not appropriate for children to learn about non-conformity to gender stereotypes.

During the public comments section of the March 8 school board meeting, the complainant's husband voiced objections to the book and said MCPS should not allow books with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) content in school libraries.

Both books were retained in district elementary school libraries.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Indianola, Nebraska

In June, the board president of the Indianola Public Library (IPL), contacted the Nebraska Library Commission to request that they compel IPL to remove a children's picture book that was donated to the library. They informed her this was a local issue and advised her to follow the library's reconsideration process.

Instead of submitting a request for the reconsideration of *Prince and Knight* by Daniel Haack, the board president pushed for the book's removal during IPL's June and July board meetings. Her arguments that the book's portrayal of a same-sex relationship was "sinful" did not convince the rest of the board that its removal was justified.

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Reno, Nevada

On June 26, a group of Proud Boys protested outside of the Sparks branch of the Washoe County Library System during a Drag Queen Storytime event that was part of their Pride Month celebrations. One of the protestors approached the library while carrying a gun, causing people inside the library, including children, to run for shelter.

Nevada is an open-carry state.

**Reported in: News 4, June 26, 2022.**

### Contoocook, New Hampshire

On June 1, a parent complained to the Hopkinton School District after a third-grade teacher read *Julian at the Wedding* by Jessica Love to her class.

The parent claimed her daughter "was confused about gender when she came home" and alleged that the book contained "subliminal messages" about gender and sexuality. She organized a group of other parents who began inundating the teacher with emailed complaints.

The book is no longer available from the school library. It is unclear if a formal request for reconsideration was ever submitted.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Cherry Hill, New Jersey

During the three weeks leading up to a June 7 Drag Queen Story Time program at the Cherry Hill Free Public Library, staff received emails and calls from an organized group in protest of the event. Most of those who contacted the library to object were from outside its service area, including as far away as Illinois.

The library went forward with the program as scheduled.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Pennsauken, New Jersey

On June 6, a local parent sent an email objecting to an upcoming Drag Queen Storytime event was sent to the Pennsauken mayor, Pennsauken Free Public Library's director and youth services librarian, the chief of police, and township committee members.

The event was held as scheduled on June 16.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Union, New Jersey

Throughout the month of June, the Union Free Public Library received complaints from a patron about the library's Pride Month displays. On multiple occasions, she checked out every book displayed, following the blueprint of CatholicVote's "Hide the Pride" campaign (*see: this issue: For the Record: Nationwide*). Each time, the library restocked the display after she left.

The patron also challenged the titles *Harriet Gets Carried Away* by Jessie Sima and *Bathe the Cat* by Alice McGinty due



to their depictions of families with gay parents.

The library retained both books.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Artesia, New Mexico

On May 10, Valerie Martin, director of Artesia Public Library, denied her teen services librarian's request to create displays for Pride Month. Numerous patrons had requested displays both in person and on Facebook.

The library had put up Pride Displays prior to 2021. The staff member was written up for insubordination when they informed Martin of an online petition calling for the library to resume Pride Displays.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Almond, New York

On February 17, the Alfred-Almond Central School District received a request to reconsider Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel *Persepolis*.

The review committee recommended retaining the book.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Aurora, New York

In June, a principal in the Southern Cayuga Central School District instructed an elementary school library aide not to shelve the recently purchased copy of *Pink, Blue, and You! Questions for Kids About Gender Stereotypes* by Elise Gravel.

The librarian instructed her to shelve the title and reminded both the principal and the aide of the district's reconsideration policy which requires library material to remain available while undergoing review.

It is unknown if the book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Batavia, New York

The Richmond Memorial Library was invited to host a regional Pride association's Drag Queen Story Time event as part of a series of programs scheduled for Pride Month.

Starting on May 16, a local moms Facebook group and a local church group started encouraging people to call and email the library board to protest the event. During the following weeks, the library received around 40 complaints about the scheduled Drag Queen Story Time, some from their service area and some from as far away as Texas.

The event took place on June 11 as scheduled and 94 people attended.

At the June 13 board meeting, one person complained during the public comments section. The individual was not a resident of the library's service area.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Blauvelt, New York

On May 16, a parent of a South Orangetown Central School District middle school student submitted a formal request for reconsideration of *My Body, My Choice: The Fight for Abortion Rights* by Robin Stevenson. On the request form, they stated that the book was "intellectually and morally inappropriate for middle school children."

It is unknown if the book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Brewster, New York

On May 23, requested that the Brewster Central School District remove *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison from both the curriculum and from school libraries.

The outcome of this challenge is unknown.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Cicero, New York

Nine books that were part of the Black History Month display at Northern Onondaga Public Library were checked out from the display by a patron who complained that the library had "these types of books."

Many of the titles were in the Racial Justice in America series. The patron did not return the books until June 9 and when she did, she submitted requests for the reconsideration of all of the titles.

All of the books she challenged were retained by the library.

The titles involved were:

- *Atrocities in Action* by Kevin P. Winn
- *Desegregation and Integration* by Kevin P. Winn
- *Income Inequality and the Fight Over Wealth Distribution* by Elliott Smith
- *Indigenous Rights* by Virginia Loh-Hagan
- *Jim Crow and Policing* by Kevin P. Winn
- *Juneteenth* by Kevin P. Winn
- *LGBTQ+ Rights* by Virginia Loh-Hagan
- *Queer Heroes: Meet 52 LGBTQ Heroes from Past and Present!* by Arabelle Sicardi
- *Voting Rights* by Kevin P. Winn

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Hamilton, New York

On May 23, staff of the Hamilton Public Library discovered that four books had been defaced with "White Lives Matter" stickers. On June 6, an additional title was discovered.

Three of the books were about the lives and experiences of Black people and were written by Black authors. A fourth title was about the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+). The final title was a



biography of Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's minister of propaganda.

The titles were:

- *Goebbels* by Ralf Georg Reuth
- *Roots* by Alex Haley
- *The Blood Trials* by N.E. Davenport
- *The Book of Pride: LGBTQ Heroes Who Changed the World* by Mason Funk
- *The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama* by David Remnick

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Nesconset, New York

On June 21, the board of the Smithtown Special Library District voted 4-2 to "remove all Pride displays in addition to removing all books of the same subject on display from all Children's sections in all Smithtown Library buildings." Displays for Pride Month were still permitted in the Teen and Adult sections of the library.

The board's action was condemned by the New York Library Association and by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) advocacy groups.

On June 23, the board held an emergency meeting and rescinded their earlier order. This motion also passed by a vote of 4-2. Board president Brianna Baker-Stines said the board "recognizes that our earlier decision was made without the time, care, and due diligence that a decision of this type deserves and that it was the wrong decision."

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports; Associated Press, June 23, 2022.**

### Patterson, New York

It was reported in July that after a policy incorporating the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" was passed out of committee and recommended to the Carmel Central

School District's board of education for approval, the superintendent independently set a procedure granting parents the right to deny their children access to library materials.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Sloan, New York

On March 24, three librarians in the Cheektowaga Sloan Union Free School District received an email inquiring about whether or not four titles were available in school libraries.

The high school librarian responded that none of the titles were owned within the district. The principal told the librarian not to order them.

The titles were:

- *33 Snowfish* by Adam Rapp
- *Call Me By Your Name* by André Aciman
- *Hands Up!* by Breanna J. McDaniel
- *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie H. Harris

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Stillwater, New York

In May, the parent of a Stillwater Central School District student submitted formal requests for the reconsideration of the books *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison and *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe.

The complainant also requested a list of all books that contain "similar connotations on sexual issues" and all books that include the terms "fag, faggot, dick, pussy, asshole, cock, cunt, cocksucker, cum, cum dumpster, blow job, [and] vagina slime." Finally, she requested that her child be restricted from checking out any such titles from school libraries.

The books were reviewed by a reconsideration committee and retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Tompkins County, New York

On June 3, the Libs of TikTok Twitter account tweeted about an upcoming drag workshop series for teens at the Tompkins County Public Library. This spurred an influx of disparaging and harassing phone calls and emails from across the country to library staff and the presenter. These include allegations that staff were "pedophiles" and "groomers." Death threats were also received.

On July 2, Rocco Lucente attended a youth drag show event co-sponsored by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance that was held as part of the city's Pride Week. Lucente took video of the performance and of attendees without their permission and shared it on social media where he referred to it as a "child ritual sacrifice" and accused all involved of being pedophiles.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

### Troy, New York

During the first week of June, a patron discovered that a graphic novel in the teens section of the Brunswick Community Library had been defaced. *Flamer* by Mike Curato has a gay main character. An unknown individual wrote a message inside the book stating, "Jesus loves you, get to know him."

The patron who discovered the message brought it to the attention of staff and expressed concern that teens might encounter it and be disturbed by what appeared to be a homophobic comment.

On June 8, a patron requested that the library reconsider the book *My Rainbow* by Neal Trinity, because it has a transgender main character.

The complainant said she represented a homeschool group and



requested that this book and all others like it be withdrawn or moved to a separate section to protect Christian parents.

The book was retained by the library.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Dare County, North Carolina

In November, 2021, print and digital copies of *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez were removed from all high school libraries in the Dare County Schools district.

The title was removed by superintendent John Farrelly after district board of education member Carl Woody asked him to do so, according to both Woody and assistant superintendent Keith Parker.

There was no formal request for the book's reconsideration, no review process, and no formal approval of this action by the board.

**Reported in: *The Outer Banks Voice*, June 10, 2022.**

### Guilford County, North Carolina

On April 21, the pressure group Take Back Our Schools posted a video on YouTube of a mother reading an excerpt from *Life is Funny* by E.R. Frank.

The description of the video states that the book is available through the libraries of seven schools in the Guilford County Schools district. It states the book is "absolutely pornographic and needs to be take [sic] out of all the schools NOW."

On May 5, the school district received a formal request for the book's reconsideration. They subsequently received two additional challenges to it.

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Harnett County, North Carolina

On June 20, the Harnett County manager ordered the Harnett County Public Library to remove the word "Pride" and all book covers from their Pride Month display.

The county manager said that members of the Harnett County Republican Party saw the display when they were using the meeting room, and reported it to the county commissioners.

The only remaining parts of the display were the words "Summer Of" and construction paper fish and seashells in every color of the rainbow.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Macon County, North Carolina

During a June 7 budget work session, Macon County commissioner Paul Higdon said he would not support increased funding for Fontana Regional Library employee salaries because they put up a Pride Month display. "I cannot support increased funding to an agency with those displays," said Higdon.

He added, "If you want to celebrate divisive things like gay pride or whatever . . . do it on private property."

Higdon's remarks came in response to a proposal from commissioner Ronnie Beale to use the county's contingency fund to increase the library budget by \$20,000 in order to keep up with the inflation and help retain staff.

Several residents in attendance expressed disappointment and disapproval of Higdon's remarks. Hannah Higney Kruse referred to them as "childish and laughable."

Lifelong resident Chris Beasley, who came out as gay when he was 12, said "I think LGBTQ representation in Franklin has been on the backburner long enough."

**Reported in: *Citizen Times*, June 13, 2022.**

### Mooresville, North Carolina

On April 26, the principal of the Brawley School sent an email to parents of students in the 6th grade language arts class informing them that they would not be finishing the book *Dry* by Neal Shusterman, due to complaints received from a group of parents.

Brawley is part of the Iredell-Statesville Schools district and their policy is to provide an alternate reading assignment when a parent objects to their child studying a book. Instead of following this policy, the book was dropped from the curriculum.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### New Hanover County, North Carolina

On May 19, parents of middle and high school students attending New Hanover County Schools alerted the police that school libraries contained "obscene and pornographic materials." The complaint included a list of nine titles.

New Hanover County Sheriff's office reviewed the books and submitted passages of interest to the District Attorney's office for legal review. District Attorney Ben David indicated the material was protected under the First Amendment and North Carolina law.

The books challenged were primarily about the lived experiences of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) and/or as Black, indigenous, or persons of color.

Titles challenged:

- *A Good Kind of Trouble* by Lisa Moore Ramée
- *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson
- *Forged by Fire* by Sharon Draper
- *Melissa* (previously published as *George*) by Alex Gino



- *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- *Queer, There, and Everywhere: 23 People Who Changed the World* by Sarah Prager
- *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
- *The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives* by Dashka Slater
- *The Glass Arrow* by Kristen Simmons

Reported in: WHQR, July 8, 2022.

## Union County, North Carolina

On June 20, it was reported that Union County manager Mark Watson prohibited the Union County Public Library from hosting seminars from Union County Pride and from participating in the county's first Pride festival in September. They were also instructed to scale back Pride Month displays at all locations.

Union County Pride had partnered with the library to host a book club for teens and they had plans for a Drag Queen Story Time event.

In a statement, Union County commissioners said, "County administration determined it was prudent to review events the library was participating in, particularly ones we had not previously participated in. Further guidance on all events and program participation may be necessary."

Union County Pride president Cristal Robinson referred to Watson's actions as discriminatory.

Reported in: WSOC, June 20, 2022.

## West Jefferson, North Carolina

On June 21, a county commissioner shared a complaint he received with the Appalachian Regional Library regarding a storywalk they set up of Todd Parr's *The Family Book*.

The complaint was that the book stated "some families have two moms or two dads." The commissioner asserted that the depiction of non-heterosexual parents was inappropriate.

In response, the library removed Parr's book from the storywalk and set up a different title. The book was retained in the library's collection, however.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

## Fargo, North Dakota

On April 25, the parent of a fourth grade student contacted the principal to complain about a library book with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) characters.

On May 4, the parent met with the school's principal, librarian, and library program facilitator. The parent then submitted a formal request for the reconsideration of *Beetle & the Hollowbones* by Aliza Layne.

On the reconsideration form, the parent objects to a frame in which two characters of the same gender kiss and that the book is a "gateway to [a] magical world." They state that they found information online stating that "the book is LGBTQ."

The complaint continued, "I'm sorry you have no common sense or values" and that providing books like this "is child abuse and against the law."

The review committee met on May 18 to discuss the children's book. The school system retained the title.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

## Huron County, Ohio

On June 21, during the public comments section of the Huron County Community Library's board meeting, a parent voiced objections to the books *Fred Gets Dressed* by Peter Brown and *Llama Glamarama* by Simon James

Green, claiming that "both books are grooming our children to believe LGBTQ is appropriate."

The individual also submitted requests for reconsideration of both titles that same day.

The books were retained in the collection.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

## Johnstown, Ohio

On April 20, Shane Dawson's book *I Hate Myselfie: A Collection of Essays* was removed from a classroom library in the Johnstown High School (JHS) following a parent complaint. The parent then requested reconsideration of the title from the school library.

On May 25, a parent submitted a formal request for the reconsideration of *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas from the JHS library. The complainant was the husband of a school board member.

The outcomes of these challenges are unknown.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

## Mercer County, Ohio

On June 10, the Mercer County District Public Library received a request to reconsider the book *Icebreaker* by A.L. Graziadei because it was "homosexual in nature."

The book was retained.

Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.

## Catoosa, Oklahoma

On July 8, a patron filed a request for the Catoosa Public Library to reconsider *Cats vs. Robots: This is War* by Margaret Stohl because it includes a non-binary character. On the reconsideration request, the patron indicated that if the book wasn't removed it should be marked with a sticker indicating that it has lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,



queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) content.

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Tulsa, Oklahoma

On July 28, Tulsa Public Schools (TPS) released a statement announcing they removed *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe and *Flamer* by Mike Curato from school libraries.

Their decision to withdraw the titles came after Oklahoma state education secretary Ryan Walters took to social media to criticize the presence of the books in TPS libraries. Walters made the posts while campaigning to become state superintendent of public instruction.

**Reported in: Associated Press, July 28, 2022.**

### Salem, Oregon

In May, the grandparents of students attending West Salem High School in the Salem-Keizer Public Schools district submitted a request for the reconsideration of *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe. Neither they nor their grandchildren had read the title.

The request and the book were reviewed by a seven-person committee which included teachers, the district's safety coordinator, a city librarian, and a district resident. In June, they voted unanimously for the district to retain *Gender Queer* in high school libraries.

The anti-LGBTQIA+ "Libs of TikTok" account brought attention to the district's decision by posting about it on Facebook. After the post, several people spoke out against the book during the public comments section of the July 12 school board meeting and district employees began receiving vulgar phone calls and threats.

**Reported in: Salem Reporter, July 15, 2022.**

### Bucks County, Pennsylvania

On June 10, a patron checked out every book that was part of the Pride display in the children's section of the Samuel Pierce branch of the Bucks County Free Library. The patron then emailed the library to inform staff that they checked the materials out in protest and would not return them "until Pride month is over and the display is taken down."

According to staff, the patron's actions and message seemed to follow the recommendations made in *Catholic-Vote*, instructing their readership to "Hide the Pride" (*see: this issue: For the Record: Nationwide*).

Library staff indicated that this was the second time a patron had checked out every book on the display, but the first time they received an email explaining the motives behind it.

The titles checked out in protest on June 10 were:

- *How to be Ace: A Memoir of Growing Up Asexual* by Rebecca Burgess
- *It Feels Good to be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity* by Theresa Thorn
- *Little & Lion* by Brandy Colbert
- *Perfect Ten* by L. Philips
- *Princess Princess Ever After* by Kay O'Neill
- *Spellbound: A Graphic Memoir* by Bishakh Som
- *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* by Lil Miss Hot Mess

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Chester County, Pennsylvania

On July 5, the Chester County Library began receiving emails, phone calls, and posts on Facebook from people complaining about a Drag Queen Bingo event their Friends group was planning for September.

The complaints began two days after a staff member received an email inquiring if the library was going to have a Drag Queen Story Hour program from a woman who said they'd like to bring her kids if so. Promotion for the event hadn't begun.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Ephrata, Pennsylvania

On May 24, a patron submitted a request for the Ephrata public library to reconsider the PG-13 film *Jesus Henry Christ*. They claimed the title of the film was objectionable for "destroying one's faith" and "making fun of God's son."

The DVD was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Honey Brook, Pennsylvania

On June 14, a mother of 4 challenged *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi at the Honey Brook Community branch of the Chester County Library System. She said that there "are no such things as races" and that the book was divisive.

The title was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania

During the week of June 19, the director of the Mount Lebanon Public Library received a patron complaint about the Pride Month display in the children's section of the library.

The patron characterized the display as "disturbing and perverse" and requested that it be taken down. They said they would not bring their children back while the display was up.

The library retained the display throughout Pride Month.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**



## Saegertown, Pennsylvania

On May 9, approval to purchase new library books for the Penncrest School District was delayed due to objections from board member David Valesky.

Valesky contended the books focused too much on racism and that they promoted what he referred to as “the hate group Black Lives Matter.”

The books were never purchased.

The books Valesky objected to were:

- *A Shot at Normal* by Marisa Reichardt
- *Apple: Skin to the Core: A Memoir in Words and Pictures* by Eric Gansworth
- *Fat Chance* by Lesléa Newman
- *Finding Junie Kim* by Ellen Oh
- *Genesis Begins Again* by Alicia Williams
- *Global Citizenship: Engage in the Politics of a Changing World* by Julie Knutson
- *Nevertheless, We Persisted: 48 Voices of Defiance, Strength, and Courage*
- *Read Between the Lines* by Johanna Knowles
- *The Downstairs Girl* by Stacey Lee

Reported in: *The Meadville Tribune*, May 12, 2022.

## Smithfield, Rhode Island

During the first week of May, formal reconsideration requests were submitted to Smithfield Public Schools for the books *A Place Inside of Me: A Poem to Heal the Heart* by Zetta Elliott, *Feed Your Mind: A Story of August Wilson* by Jennifer Bryant, and *Were I Not a Girl: The Inspiring and True Story of Dr. James Barry* by Lisa Robinson.

The books challenged dealt with issues of race and racism, and the lived experiences of Black and transgender individuals.

A review committee consisting of school principals, school librarians, and the assistant superintendent determined the books were age-appropriate

and should remain in library media centers. The superintendent agreed with the committee’s recommendations. The outcome was appealed to the board.

On June 6, the board voted 4-1 to uphold the prior recommendations and retain the books in elementary school libraries.

Reported in: *Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report; Smithfield School Committee Minutes, June 6, 2022;*

## Richland, South Carolina

Every book was checked out from a Pride Month display at the Richland branch library of the Richland County Public Library (RCPL).

The patron left a letter templated on CatholicVote’s “Hide the Pride” campaign, an overtly homophobic and transphobic effort to “reclaim” public library spaces by removing children’s books with characters who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+). (*See: this issue: For the Record: Nationwide*).

In their letter, the patron said they would “keep these books checked out until the library agrees to remove the inappropriate content from the shelves.”

Tamara King, equity and engagement officer for RCPL, said the display would be restocked with titles.

Reported in: *The State*, June 17, 2022.

## Sioux Falls, South Dakota

In April, a patron of Siouxland Libraries submitted a request for reconsideration of *How Do You Make a Baby?* by Anna Fiske, claiming that it contained “pornographic images.”

The library retained the book.

Reported in: *Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.*

## Madison County, Tennessee

On June 14, a group of women led by county commissioner Cyndi Bryant entered the Jackson-Madison County Library (JMCL) to register a formal complaint against the library’s Pride Month display. Misreading the title of K-Ming Chang’s novel *Bestiary*, Bryant proclaimed, “This display is promoting bestiality!”

On June 15, the library director informed staff she’d had a meeting with multiple county commissioners and board members and that they were threatening to withhold funding from the library because of the display. She removed the books *Bestiary* and *Over the Top: My Story* by Jonathan Van Ness from the display, indicating they had specifically been focused on during the meeting.

The Pride display dominated discussion during the June 22 board meeting, with numerous members of the public speaking out against it and in its defense. Board director Greg Jordan stood behind staff and the library display, however. “The display stands and will not be taken down,” said Jordan.

Reported in: *Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report; Jackson Sun*, June 26, 2022.

## Nashville, Tennessee

On July 18, the Instagram account kendall\_in\_kentucky posted a video titled “hide books” in which she read excerpts from *Flamer* by Mike Curato out of context and listed the school libraries in Nashville that carry it. She called on her followers to call the schools and demand the book’s removal.

The twelve high schools in the Metro Nashville Public Schools district that held the book retained it on their shelves.

Reported in: *Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.*



## Ector County, Texas

On June 6, a parent and her children walked out of a two-person production of *Treasure Island* performed at the Ector County Library. The woman went to the managing librarian's office to challenge the play on grounds that the female actor's portrayal of male characters was an act "against God" which could cause "earthquakes, hurricanes, and wildfires."

The managing librarian listened to the woman's concerns and allowed the production to continue.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

## Fort Bend County, Texas

In late Fall of 2021, Beth Martinez, chief academic officer for Fort Bend Independent School District (ISD), drove to both campuses that held *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe and removed the copies. The books were not returned.

In January, Martinez was promoted to deputy superintendent. At an April board meeting, it was announced that a request for reconsideration of *Gender Queer* had been received. A Freedom of Information Act request revealed that the form was submitted by Martinez while she was still chief academic officer.

The challenge form requested the removal of the book from both district high school libraries that owned it, Dulles and Lawrence E. Elkins, indicated that the book had not been read by the complainant, and stated that it is "illegal to expose children under 18 to pornographic materials."

The book was withdrawn from both libraries.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

## Granbury, Texas

On March 19, the Granbury Independent School District received a formal

request for the reconsideration of *Bloody Horowitz* by Anthony Horowitz. The complaint was submitted by a parent whose daughter checked the book out from a school library and expressed concerns over depictions of violence in the book.

The title was withdrawn.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

## McKinney, Texas

On June 25, members of the Proud Boys gathered outside of a Pride-themed family storytime held at a branch of the McKinney Public Library (MPL). The Proud Boys wore masks and tactical gear. Several carried bear spray and one openly carried a pistol. One was caught on camera pushing a counter-demonstrator and was issued a citation.

On June 12, Proud Boys members had protested a drag queen brunch event at the library for those who were 21 and older.

Gillian Barnstetter, a communication strategist with the ACLU, said "These are clearly part of a rising tide of hatred and I'm afraid to say that I don't know how it ends or where it goes."

Proud Boys did not gain access to MPL during either of their Pride Month protests.

**Reported in: *The Real News Network*, June 29, 2022.**

## Melissa, Texas

On May 10, the Melissa Public Library and Melissa city council received an email from an individual without a library card claiming that *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe was "child pornography." They included a link to a TikTok video of the book being challenged during a school board meeting as evidence.

The library retained the title.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

## Rockwall, Texas

In April, administrators of the Rockwall Independent School District instructed librarians to remove 21 titles from all school and classroom libraries. Of these, 13 were to be immediately withdrawn from the online catalog and 8 were to be considered "under review" and only made available with parental permission.

No requests were received for the reconsideration of these titles and the district's formal review procedure was not followed.

Titles permanently withdrawn:

- *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas
- *All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto* by George M. Johnson
- *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Flamer* by Mike Curato
- *L8r, G8r* by Lauren Myracle
- *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
- *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews
- *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur
- *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky
- *This One Summer* by Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki
- *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins

Titles removed from the shelves for review:

- *A Quick & Easy Guide to Queer & Trans Identities* by Mady G
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Eleanor & Park* by Rainbow Rowell
- *Fade* by Lisa McCann
- *Keeping You a Secret* by Julie Anne Peters
- *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison
- *The Glass Castle* by Jeanette Walls



- *TTYL (Talk to You Later)* by Lauren Myracle

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

### Tyler, Texas

In February, a patron of the Tyler Public Library requested the formal reconsideration of *Blue is the Warmest Color* by Julie Maroh due to its depictions of “two women engaging in sexual acts.” He complained the library was making it accessible to children even though it was shelved in the adult collection.

The graphic novel was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Richfield, Utah

On November 17, 2021, the assistant superintendent of the Sevier School District sent an email calling for the removal of *Looking for Alaska* by John Green from all school libraries, citing sexual content akin to what Utah legislators were working to remove from schools.

On March 24 HB 374 pertaining to “sensitive materials in schools” was signed into law. (See: Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.7 iss.2: *For the Record: Utah*). This appears to have been a preemptive effort to comply with it.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### South Salt Lake City, Utah

On May 20, the board of the Granite School District instructed all district schools to remove every book from a list of 35 titles from their libraries.

The books were neither formally challenged nor reviewed by a committee. Instead, the board stated that they were in violation of HB 374, “Sensitive Materials in Schools,” which went into effect on May 4, 2022. (See: Journal of

Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.7 iss.2: *For the Record: Utah*).

The books withdrawn from district libraries in response to HB 374 were:

- *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas
- *A Court of Silver Flames* by Sarah J. Maas
- *Allegedly* by Tiffany Jackson
- *Almost Perfect* by Brian Katcher
- *Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging* by Louise Rennison
- *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susan Kuklin
- *Brazen: Rebel Ladies Who Rocked the World* by Pénélope Bagieu
- *Breathless* by Jennifer Niven
- *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Damsel* by Elana K. Arnold
- *Eleanor & Park* by Rainbow Rowell
- *Forever* by Judy Blume
- *Impulse* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Infamous* by Elana K. Arnold
- *L8r, G8r* by Lauren Myracle
- *Laura Dean Keeps Breaking Up With Me* by Mariko Tamaki
- *Lucky* by Alice Sebold
- *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* by Jesse Andrews
- *Melissa* (previously published as *George*) by Alex Gino
- *Monday's Not Coming* by Tiffany Jackson
- *Push* by Sapphire
- *Red Hood* by Elana K. Arnold
- *Sold* by Patricia McCormick
- *The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives* by Dashka Slater
- *The Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta
- *The Haters* by Jesse Andrews
- *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo
- *The Truth about Alice* by Jennifer Mathieu
- *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher
- *This One Summer* by Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki
- *Tilt* by Ellen Hopkins
- *Triangles* by Ellen Hopkins

- *Tricks* by Ellen Hopkins
- *TTYL (Talk to You Later)* by Lauren Myracle
- *What Girls Are Made Of* by Elana K. Arnold

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Springville Public Library, Utah

On June 15, a patron of the Springville Public Library submitted requests for the reconsideration of the board books *Being You: A First Conversation About Gender* by Megan Madison and *The Pronoun Book* by Chris Ayala-Kronos.

The books were reviewed and retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### West Jordan, Utah

On May 3, a parent of a 6th grade student submitted book challenge forms requesting the Jordan School District to reconsider *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, *What Girls Are Made Of* by Elana K. Arnold, and *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur.

The books are held in district high school libraries, but not in the school that the student attends.

*The Bluest Eye* was retained. *What Girls Are Made Of* and *Milk and Honey* were withdrawn.

On May 9, an individual who does not reside within the school district and does not have any children enrolled in district schools, submitted requests for the West Jordan Middle School to reconsider *Monday's Not Coming* by Tiffany Jackson and *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.

The outcomes of these challenges are unknown.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**



### Albemarle County, Virginia

On April 25, a parent emailed a complaint about the book *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas to two librarians and a principal at Albemarle County Public Schools. The parent requested the book's removal due to a sexually explicit scene in it. The high school library held a print copy in Spanish and provided access to the English text through their ebook platform.

A librarian met with the principal to discuss the book and the district's reconsideration policy. The principal removed the print copy without waiting to receive a formal request for the title's reconsideration or referring it to a committee for review.

The principal also recommended removal of the ebook to district officials as it is part of a shared collection.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Arlington, Virginia

On April 1, Arlington Public Schools received a complaint via email from a parent who did not want her kindergarten to have access to a book held in district high school libraries. She requested a copy of the reconsideration form so she could challenge *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe.

Ultimately, the parent refused to submit the form, as she did not want to read the book, which is a prerequisite for initiating the reconsideration process.

Kobabe's memoir was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Chesapeake, Virginia

On May 25, Chesapeake Public Schools Library Supervisor instructed librarians to remove *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas from all high school libraries.

The book's removal was undertaken not in response to a complaint from a parent in the school district, but rather because a neighboring district withdrew the title after it was challenged there.

On May 26, it was reported that *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe was also removed. Elizabeth Haskins, Great Bridge High School assistant principal, said it was removed after they received a written complaint from a district parent.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report; 13 News Now, May 26, 2022.**

### Goochland County, Virginia

On January 27, Goochland County Public Schools received a formal request from a school board member to reconsider *#MurderTrending* by Gretchen McNeil citing concerns that it was sexually explicit.

The principal reviewed the title and determined it should remain on the library shelf. The school board member did not appeal the outcome.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Henrico County, Virginia

On March 12, a parent submitted a request for Henrico County Public Schools to reconsider *A Good Kind of Trouble* by Lisa Moore Ramée. The district has 33 copies of the novel, 16 at elementary schools and 6 at middle schools.

The novel is about a 12-year old Black girl who stands up to authority after she gets in trouble for wearing a Black Lives Matter armband to school. The complainant alleged that the book supported a "Marxist group" and was written to "indoctrinate" students.

On May 3, the day after *Henrico Citizen* published an article about the challenge, the complainant withdrew their request. A review committee had been

formed on March 13 and the review process was well underway at the time.

**Reported in: Henrico Citizen, May 2, 2022, and May 4, 2022.**

### Loudoun County, Virginia

In May, Loudoun County Public Library director Chang Liu canceled a library-sponsored program on gender identity. Staff were informed that going forwards, all programs dealing with race, sexuality, or history would need to go through an approval process.

LCPL also implemented guidelines requiring library displays to represent "both sides" of all issues. As a result, staff were required to include a book on conversion therapy in their Pride Month display.

All staff were also instructed that it was forbidden to use the word "queer" in any library publications and the words "queer" and "gay" had to be removed from signage that was part of the Pride display. Staff were also told that any children's books in the Pride display needed to be moved to the highest shelves, so children would be less likely to see them and unable to reach them.

In June, the library board revised their policy to require parental permission for any minor to get a library card, making it more difficult for teenagers to access library materials.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

### Prince William County, Virginia

On May 27, the parent of a child attending Prince William County Public Schools challenged three titles. They indicated they did not read the books, but discovered the books had characters who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) by reading reviews on Amazon.



The titles challenged were: *Carlos Gomez Freestyles: Heavy on the Style* by Chuck Gonzalez, *Julian is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love, and *What Riley Wore* by Elana K. Arnold.

Also during May, another parent challenged the graphic novel adaptation of *The Giver* by P. Craig Russell and Lois Lowry due to its depiction of infanticide.

The outcomes of these challenges are unknown.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge reports.**

### Virginia Beach, Virginia

Virginia Beach City Public School (VBCPS) board member Victoria Manning and state house delegate Tim Anderson challenged the graphic novel series *Saga* by Brian K. Vaughan, *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe, and *A Court of Mist and Fury* in VBCPS libraries.

In response to Manning's endeavors, *Gender Queer* was withdrawn from district libraries despite having been formally challenged and retained last year (see: Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v.7 iss.1: Success Stories: Schools: Virginia Beach, Virginia).

In the wake of Anderson's campaign to remove books from their school libraries, teachers and librarians at VBCPS received a significant volume of emails containing threats and allegations that they were breaking the law by providing access to the books.

In September, a VBCPS spokesperson released a statement acknowledging that "emails that have been perceived as threatening in nature were sent to multiple staff members regarding books in our schools. It is unconscionable that any member of our community would allude to 'retribution' in an attempt to intimidate members of VBCPS staff."

The spokesperson encouraged parents to adhere to the district's established procedures for challenging

materials if they take issue with any of the books in district libraries.

**Reported in: 13 News Now, May 26, 2022, and September 13, 2022.**

### Tacoma, Washington

In March, a patron of the Tacoma Public Library objected to depictions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) characters in picture books generally. They submitted requests for the reconsideration of *Pride Puppy* by Robin Stevenson and *Pink is for Boys* by Robb Pearlman in which they alleged the books were a form of "brainwashing."

The titles were reviewed and retained where they were originally shelved.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Tumwater, Washington

On February 10, a patron of the Timberland Regional Library submitted a formal request for the reconsideration of *Watchmen: An HBO Limited Series*, due to bigotry, hatred, and obscenity.

The library retained the DVD series.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Wenatchee, Washington

Throughout March and April, the North Central Regional Library received complaints regarding both their physical and ebook copies of *Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe. In each instance, the complainant was informed of the library's collection development policy and endorsement of the Library Bill of Rights. No one followed through by submitting a formal request for the book's reconsideration.

On June 2, executive director Barbara Walters was notified by the city council that a group had been organized around removing the book from the

library. A city council member asked Walters how the library could allow a "pornographic" book to be on the shelves while filtering internet access on public computers.

The physical and digital copies of Kobabe's memoir were retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Berkeley County, West Virginia

On April 29, a candidate for the school board submitted a request for Berkeley County Schools to reconsider *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas citing articles that they'd read "about inappropriate books in school libraries."

The book was retained.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

A parent requested that *Neanderthal Opens the Door to the Universe* by Preston Norton be removed from a 9th grade reading list and from Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District libraries.

While the title was not specifically assigned, students were required to read five titles of their choice from the reading list it was included on.

During a meeting held on May 2, a review committee recommended keeping the book. The parent who submitted the request for reconsideration appealed the committee's decision.

On June 29, the school board decided to require a parent or guardian to sign a consent slip before any student under the age of 18 would be allowed to read the book.

**Reported in: WEAU, May 2, 2022; The Chippewa Herald, June 30, 2022.**

### Greendale, Wisconsin

On June 2, the Greendale Public Library received a request to reconsider three titles by Patricia Polacco from the library. The complainant characterized



the books as “Russian propaganda” full of historical misinformation and appropriation of Ukrainian cultural heritage.

When staff went to review the items, they discovered that the library only owned one of the challenged titles. The decision was made to retain *Rechenka's Eggs*.

The titles which were challenged but not owned by the library were *Luba and the Wren* and *Babushka's Mother Goose*.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Luxemburg, Wisconsin

A parent requested reconsideration of Mike Curato's graphic novel *Flamer* at Luxemburg-Casso School District libraries. When school administrators elected to retain the title, the complainant appealed the decision to the school board.

The curriculum committee, which included three board members, met on May 3 to discuss the appeal of the administration's recommendation to retain *Flamer*. They voted unanimously to retain the graphic novel and place a moratorium on considering further challenges to it for five years.

**Reported in: WBAY, Jul 13, 2022.**

### Pewaukee, Wisconsin

On July 12, a patron sent an email to the library director and a board member of the Pewaukee Public Library objecting to an upcoming teen program on Tarot.

The woman characterized cartomancy as evil and said that “divination is expressly forbidden in the Bible and its practice causes participants to turn away from God.”

An announcement that the program was canceled was made on July 14, less than two weeks before it was scheduled to take place.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Stoughton, Wisconsin

On April 28, the parents of a Stoughton Area School District high school senior sent a lengthy email in which they challenged and threatened to burn *Perfect Chemistry* by Simone Elkeles. They claimed the book was “smut,” “gross,” and “sent the wrong message to both boys and girls about losing their virginity.”

The librarian met with the parents, explained the library's policies and reconsideration process. The parents opted not to submit a formal request for the book's reconsideration, but asked that their other children

not be allowed to check out that title or any other book in the series. Notes were added to their patron records accordingly.

**Reported in: Office for Intellectual Freedom challenge report.**

### Wausau, Wisconsin

On April 11, the Wausau School Board voted to remove “sensitive topics” from the Wit and Wisdom English language arts curriculum for grades 3-5, citing concerns about “politically motivated” teachers.

The sensitive topics the board voted to exclude books on were race, racism, sexuality, and gender identity. Specific titles excluded from the curriculum were not reported.

Portions of the Wit and Wisdom curriculum were also targeted in Williamson County, Tennessee, and Oskaloosa, Iowa.

(See: Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy, v. 7 iss.2: *Censorship Dateline: Schools: Oskaloosa, Iowa*; v.7 iss.1: *Censorship Dateline: Schools: Williamson County, Tennessee, and Success Stories: Schools: Williamson County, Tennessee*; v. 6 iss.4: *Censorship Dateline: Schools: Williamson County, Tennessee*).

**Reported in: Wausau Pilot and Review, April 12, 2022.**