

To: **Ms. Amber Baumbach**
Library Media and Instructional Materials Specialist
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Amber.Baumbach@fldoe.org

CC: **Governor Ron DeSantis**
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State of Florida
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Mr. Manny Diaz
Commissioner of Education
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From: Concerned Citizens

RE: Letter Concerning Guidance and Clarity on Florida Statute 847.001 and 847.012

Date: November 2022

Dear Ms. Baumbach,

As a parent, citizen, and taxpayer, I am gravely concerned about the inappropriate books in our school libraries. These books are knowingly available to students in our public schools. This violates Florida Statutes 847.001 and 847.012.

We do not know how these books got into the schools, nor how many are coming into the schools on a daily basis. But we do know one thing: no one is being held accountable! For this reason, I am insisting on clear rules and parameters for vetting books, not only purchased for school libraries, but for those accepted as donations for the media centers, classroom libraries, and etc. Special interest groups and activist teachers donate thousands of books to our schools every single year. These donations may seem well meaning, but they serve to push political ideologies while they brainwash and sexualize our Florida students.

Currently, the guidance requires the books to be reviewed as a “whole” for “literary Value.” The State DOE committee tasked with creating the training for all Florida school district librarian and media center specialists is using this caveat in the statute to justify illegal content in these books. This will not only allow the books to remain in the libraries, harming children, but it will also encourage publishers and book purchasers to invite even more of this corruption into the schools! The Florida Department of Education must follow Florida Statute 847.001 and 847.012 FIRST!

I am proposing that any book, media material, curriculum, online course, school assignment, or supplemental educational resource must be free of the following items.

- Limited words of profanity
- Free from any slang terms describing any human sexual anatomy, male or female. Correct anatomical names may be used, if and only if, the text is contained in a scientific or health publication on human anatomy or physiology
- Words, details, or depictions describing:
 - the physical act of sexual intercourse (to include anal, and oral sex) between minors, between adults, or between a minor engaged with an adult
 - acts of self sexual stimulation or masturbation
 - any kinds of sexual toys
 - anything suggesting or talking about sexual arousal or fantasy
 - a sexual encounter of rape or incest
 - gang rape
 - purposeful harm done to another by way of a physical sexual act that is considered sadomasochistic or torturous abuse
 - Satanic rituals or sacrifice
 - sexual battery, to include oral sex, anal sex, or any other penetration of male or female body parts
 - torture or death upon another person
 - sexual abuse, or sexual abuse of a minor
 - bestiality

True literature gives the reader insight. It portrays a message using words that allude to an idea and allows the reader to use their imagination and power of deductive reasoning. Pornographic, vulgar, obscene, and profane language is not only NOT required, it is unlawful and unethical for children. The English language has enough dialect to describe a situation without breaking the law. The scientific evidence is vast and uncontested, that this type of grotesque content leaves a permanent impression on children, that they do not know how to process. This creates long lasting psychological damage, which leads to future harmful behaviors that are detrimental to the reader and to society, as a whole.

Florida Literacy rates are barely at a third grade level. The DOE is charged with educating students, not harming them! Even those who have been subjected to this kind of abuse should not be encouraged to relive the trauma outside of a controlled setting, such as a psychologist's office. This content will not discourage others from committing these crimes. Reading books and stories like this will not keep it from happening to an innocent person. The notion of literary value is being reworked by globalization, digitalization, and the shaping influences of media. It is no longer about enlightenment or instilling a positive view of life, which is what our young people need right now.

The State DOE needs to convey a clear and concise plan to STOP these books from coming into the schools by:

1. Providing clear language of what defines appropriate literature for minors. We do not want PORNOGRAPHIC content of ANY kind.
2. Setting the rule that if there is ANY wording or description that is against Statutes 847.001 and 847.012, it is prohibited, regardless of the perceived literary value of the "whole" book and its entire contents.
3. Providing a list of prohibited terminology to accompany the above listed prohibitions
4. Provide rules on who may make up the book review committee, to require 50% parent representation. The parent representation must be balanced. No employee of the district can fill the seat designated for parent. The makeup of the committee must equally represent both side of the political spectrum.
5. The rules should be recorded with each book, with a signature of who ordered and purchased the book.
6. The report of the book review committee should be made accessible to the public and attached to each book housed in the catalogue.
7. Allowing for robust public discourse during the review committee meetings
8. Set clear and defined disciplinary procedures that will be enforced on media personnel who purchase prohibited books following the approval of the clarified policy. Statue 847.012 states each pornographic violation is a separate offense. After the second offense, a felony of the third degree shall be charged, by law of Statue 847.012.

Additional Personal Comments:

Name:

Address:

Email:

Signature: