
From: Striebinger, David R <David.Striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Thursday, October 6, 2022 8:07 AM
To: Mike Covert; Robine, Cathy G; Middleton, Angela D; Campbell, Earl; Smith, William C; Fidrych, Patricia; richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us; Wisnefski, Rachel K; christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us; Campbell, Melvin P; ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us; Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: Re: Recent School Board Meeting

Mr. Covert, there is a process for parents to challenge available literature.

david striebinger
Chair, Beaufort Co. Board of Education
District 2 representative
Beaufort, Lady's Island, Dataw Island, Harbor Island

From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 1:30 PM
To: Striebinger, David R <David.Striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Middleton, Angela D <Angela.Middleton@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Earl <earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Smith, William C <William.Smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Fidrych, Patricia <Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us <richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Wisnefski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us <christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Melvin P <Melvin.Campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us <ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Recent School Board Meeting

WARNING: This email originated from outside of Beaufort County School District's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Chairman Striebinger and School Board Members:

Thank you for taking the time to give me the professional courtesy of reading this email and, hopefully, providing me a response individually or as a "body".

My comments today are in response to your recent School Board meeting where several constituents made public comment regarding several books etc in public schools. I had "heard rumors" of such and actually went and did my own research on this subject. I utilized the "destiny system" available to taxpayers and looked at every school's library---- or, correction--- the library at the schools who make them available to taxpayers. (Yes, there are some County public schools that chose to not link their libraries up to the taxpayer reporting system, sadly enough) I looked for one book specifically, "*Stamped*" by Kendi.

I was surprised somewhat to find the book at every high school and middle school (that reports) and also in Spanish but was **ABSOLUTELY** shocked to find it at one elementary school. (Okatie Elementary) This book, just this one alone, is widely known for its race baiting; race hating; demoralizing rhetoric all part of SEL (social, emotional learning) criteria known to be the catalyst for, and basis of, CRT (critical race theory). There are other widely known books out there, but this the one I chose to investigate. This same book was looked into in the Pickens County School system recently by parents and community members. Within the last few weeks, precedence **HAS BEEN**

SET, by the vote of the Pickens County School Board, to remove this book and others like it, from the County public school libraries.

The question of being fiduciaries to the public begs the question to you all--- By having this material, at the ease of children to read and review, put the BCSD in any jeopardy of violating Proviso 1.105 and/or 1.93?

There ARE some things being done in this school district that DO in fact violate both of those Proviso's, however, I will not dwell on that issue at the time. I remain interested in the fact that by Pickens County creating precedence, now, you have been given the catalyst to remove this book and any other like it, from the inventory at every public school. This process could be done one of two ways, in my humble opinion. First, announced removal of said books by the school board in an effort to be "forward thinking" and being "proactive", or, by the second means-- through the arduous task of listening to, or participating in, continued public outcry, debate, public social media heroism and any other means available to the public.

I ask you to be proactive. Consider the hard work already done by others, that you can utilize to your favor, and stopping the continued barrage of indoctrination of our children by means that have no business in the public-school setting. A book such as "*Stamped*" or one of its cohorts, may be worth the argument of being a part of critical thinking skills in post-secondary education, but NOT in the K-12 arena. Please, remove this book, and any other like it in the SEL/CRT area from our public school libraries.

My Best-

Michael E Covert
Former Beaufort County Councilman
District 7

[REDACTED]
Mike Covert
[REDACTED]

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From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 11:13 AM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: School Libraries

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Good Morning Dr Rodriguez--

I want to begin by saying THANK YOU for taking the broad and very much needed steps recently in this controversial "books in libraries" subject. I do believe, you have interrupted, or at least intercepted, an enormous public upheaval against the pushback from Board members, some teachers and librarians.

I would ask for you, as well as Dr Stratos, this "committee" and the School Board in general-- to realize a very important piece of this puzzle: For decades the social progressives fought against several things in public schools such as The Bible; the 10 Commandments; school prayer and even the Pledge of Allegiance in some instances. Because this was in "public schools", they actually had a legitimate argument. Fast forward to today, the "shoe is on the other foot", as they say. Those same social progressives are becoming apoplectic over this. However, the overriding piece to this is, these books are in schools that are **PUBLIC**, paid for and with **PUBLIC TAX DOLLARS**. These books should in no shape, way or form, be allowed to be near children in K-12 atmosphere, of a public school.

I have spoken with several teachers and some librarians who are in favor of leaving these books where they are and their conclusive response is that "we should be the ones who decide who, what, where and when children read, not the parents or society". That is far, far from the truth and from reality. I strongly urge anyone in the **PUBLIC SCHOOL** setting, to reconsider their career choice if that is their beliefs. The Chief Executive Officer of the PUBLIC SCHOOL system, are the PARENTS. Please don't misunderstand me--- I don't say that as a power struggle type retort, it is the systematic lack of understanding by "some" of those folks who educate. As I said to one teacher the other day....."As the teacher, i urge you to teach, not parent. Parents need to parent."

I would like to know, at some point when available, how books are put into the libraries and what that process looks like. Who decides....who orders....who signs off....etc. What about schools that have books donated by parents, neighbors, grandparents etc. How is that process handled and who signs off on all of this.

Frank-- thank you again for your time. I, for one, deeply appreciate the job you are doing. You are the best thing that happened to Beaufort County Public Schools in a long, long time.

Michael E Covert
Former Beaufort County Councilman
Mike Covert
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



From: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 10:24 AM
To: 'Mike Covert'
Subject: RE: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

Mike,
Thank you. I will have my team look into the books.
Franks

From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 10:05 AM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Re: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

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Michael E Covert

From: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 09:54
To: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

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Regards,
Frank

From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 9:22 AM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
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screened...rated from a "0" to "5". 0 being rather very low in questionable content.....5 being the absolute worst possible.

My Best-

Michael E Covert

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Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 09:09
To: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
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Mike,

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Good Morning Dr. Rodriguez-

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I wanted to get this to you from the recent events. A few weeks ago, I sent an email to the entire Board and received responses back from David and Ms. Robine. (I am still in shock about David passing--- I knew he "had" cancer but I thought he had beaten it. Very tragic, very sad. I gave him a moment at the opening of my live stream last night) The email was in reference to what (at that time) had just occurred in Pickens County as the school board there was bombarded with evidence of books in libraries of public schools that was R and X rated and the public had gone ballistic. My email to them was that of professional courtesy that I "have an ear to the ground and a thumb on the subject" and Beaufort County is beginning to boil about this.

I gave them a suggestion that if they wanted to avoid the public bashing and possible media blitz of bad news.....they would heed my warning and remove this and ny books from school libraries before this gets vocally out of hand or control. I was told by both responders that I needed to fill out "form xyz 123 and abc 456" and submit it etc etc.

Frank, we are way, way beyond that here. We are now beginning to see the public outcry that is going to get louder and more vocal if nothing is done. Last night was the beginning of that by residents giving their public comment.

I took it upon myself to have some folks help me with some discoveries for my radio show. We discovered not only the book "*Stamped*", Kendi, is in every high school and middle school in the

county, but also one elementary school. We pushed a little harder and yesterday I was given evidence of a book named, "*Tricks*", by Hopkins, also in County public schools. When I looked up the data of the book, I gagged to think that my grandkids could get their hands on this. This book in particular has a 5 of 5 Aberrant Content rating (worse of the worse) Furthering this investigation, we have found there are a total of 96 book titles that are considered R or X rated, in our country public school system libraries.

Frank, I in no way- shape- or form am qualified to advise anyone on education, but I am when it comes to public safety and public interest. I will reiterate to you what I told the School Board-- you have the opportunity to have a HUGE win right now, by pulling these books completely and unequivocally BEFORE the public barrage comes harder and harder, because--- it IS coming. I continue to admire you for what you have brought to this School District and your leadership. You have a tough, tough job but this should be an easy fix.

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I wanted to get this to you from the recent events. A few weeks ago, I sent an email to the entire Board and received responses back from David and Ms. Robine. (I am still in shock about David passing--- I knew he "had" cancer but I thought he had beaten it. Very tragic, very sad. I gave him a moment at the opening of my live stream last night) The email was in reference to what (at that time) had just occurred in Pickens County as the school board there was bombarded with evidence of books in libraries of public schools that was R and X rated and the public had gone ballistic. My email to them was that of professional courtesy that I "have an ear to the ground and a thumb on the subject" and Beaufort County is beginning to boil about this.

I gave them a suggestion that if they wanted to avoid the public bashing and possible media blitz of bad news.....they would heed my warning and remove this and ny books from school libraries before this gets vocally out of hand or control. I was told by both responders that I needed to fill out "form xyz 123 and abc 456" and submit it etc etc.

Frank, we are way, way beyond that here. We are now beginning to see the public outcry that is going to get louder and more vocal if nothing is done. Last night was the beginning of that by residents giving their public comment.

I took it upon myself to have some folks help me with some discoveries for my radio show. We discovered not only the book "*Stamped*", Kendi, is in every high school and middle school in the county, but also one elementary school. We pushed a little harder and yesterday I was given evidence of a book named, "*Tricks*", by Hopkins, also in County public schools. When I looked up the data of the book, I gagged to think that my grandkids could get their hands on this. This book in particular has a 5 of 5 Aberrant Content rating (worse of the worse) Furthering this investigation, we have found there are a total of 96 book titles that are considered R or X rated, in our country public school system libraries.

Frank, I in no way- shape- or form am qualified to advise anyone on education, but I am when it comes to public safety and public interest. I will reiterate to you what I told the School Board-- you have the opportunity to have a HUGE win right now, by pulling these books completely and unequivocally BEFORE the public barrage comes harder and harder, because--- it IS coming. I continue to admire you for what you have brought to this School District and your leadership. You have a tough, tough job but this should be an easy fix.

My Best-

Michael E Covert
Mike Covert



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Mike Covert



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From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 9:22 AM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: Re: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

Thank you for replying Frank....and yes. I will have those book titles sent over and forwarded to you. As a side note....one of the sites we use to see "content" of these books is called, "www.booklooks.org". It is one of the most thorough sites I've seen. Books seem to be fairly screened...rated from a "0" to "5". 0 being rather very low in questionable content.....5 being the absolute worst possible.

My Best-

Michael E Covert

From: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 09:09
To: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

Mike,
Thank you for reaching out and I hope you and your family is also doing well. Last night, the Board put on future topics a discussion this issue. You mention that there is a list of 96 books that have R or X rated content. Where can I find a copy of that list so that I can have my team review which ones are in our libraries. Thank you for reaching out. I appreciate it.
Regards,
Frank

From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 8:54 AM
To: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

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My Best-

Michael E Covert
Mike Covert



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Mike Covert



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From: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 9:10 AM
To: 'Mike Covert'
Subject: RE: A Personal Note to Dr Rodriguez

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To: Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
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Michael E Covert

Mike Covert

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My Best-

Michael E Covert

Mike Covert



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From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 6, 2022 8:25 AM
To: Striebinger, David R; Robine,Cathy G; Middleton, Angela D; Campbell, Earl; Smith, William C; Fidrych, Patricia; richard.geier@beaufport.k12.sc.us; Wisnefski, Rachel K; christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us; Campbell, Melvin P; ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us; Rodriguez, Francisco
Subject: Re: Recent School Board Meeting

Chairman Striebenger--

I am copying and pasting my response to Ms Robine from yesterday evening. It applies to your response as well. Might as well have the entire Board see it, as well as Supt Rodriguez.

Ms. Robine-

Thank you for your reply, but I honestly believe we are "way past" a normal "fill this out and submit it" situation. People are expressing their frustrations.....many more will be doing so, I believe. I am offering you and your colleagues a "friendly" bit of advice and suggestion to take proactive steps before this blows out of proportion. Pickens County School concern went "viral" as they say. If you and/or the other School Board Trustees do not mind that type of attention, then...I guess waiting for those forms to be submitted would suffice for you. Just my advice; my thoughts; my suggestions as a former elected official who has his ear and thumbs on this and a lot, lot more public dissent right now.

The "ball is truly in your court". I'm just offering you the perspective from some who has been in your shoes, and has an ear to the street.

My Best--

Michael E Covert
Former Beaufort County Councilman
District 7
[REDACTED]

Michael E Covert, FSR/DSG
Yandle Witherspoon Supply
[REDACTED]

From: Striebinger, David R <David.Striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: Thursday, October 6, 2022 08:06
To: Mike Covert [REDACTED]; Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Middleton, Angela D <Angela.Middleton@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Earl <earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Smith, William C <William.Smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Fidrych, Patricia <Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; richard.geier@beaufport.k12.sc.us <richard.geier@beaufport.k12.sc.us>; Wisnefski, Rachel K

<Rachel.Wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us <christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Melvin P <Melvin.Campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us <ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Rodriguez, Francisco <Francisco.Rodriguez@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Re: Recent School Board Meeting

Mr. Covert, there is a process for parents to challenge available literature.

david striebinger
Chair, Beaufort Co. Board of Education
District 2 representative
Beaufort, Lady's Island, Dataw Island, Harbor Island

From: Mike Covert [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 1:30 PM
To: Striebinger, David R <David.Striebinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Robine, Cathy G <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Middleton, Angela D <Angela.Middleton@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Earl <earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Smith, William C <William.Smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Fidrych, Patricia <Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us <richard.geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Wisnefski, Rachel K <Rachel.Wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us <christina.gwodz@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; Campbell, Melvin P <Melvin.Campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>; ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us <ingrid.boatwright@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Subject: Recent School Board Meeting

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Chairman Striebinger and School Board Members:

Thank you for taking the time to give me the professional courtesy of reading this email and, hopefully, providing me a response individually or as a "body".

My comments today are in response to your recent School Board meeting where several constituents made public comment regarding several books etc in public schools. I had "heard rumors" of such and actually went and did my own research on this subject. I utilized the "destiny system" available to taxpayers and looked at every school's library---- or, correction--- the library at the schools who make them available to taxpayers. (Yes, there are some County public schools that chose to not link their libraries up to the taxpayer reporting system, sadly enough) I looked for one book specifically, "*Stamped*" by Kendi.

I was surprised somewhat to find the book at every high school and middle school (that reports) and also in Spanish but was **ABSOLUTELY** shocked to find it at one elementary school. (Okatie Elementary) This book, just this one alone, is widely known for its race baiting; race hating; demoralizing rhetoric all part of SEL (social, emotional learning) criteria known to be the catalyst for, and basis of, CRT (critical race theory). There are other widely known books out there, but this the one I chose to investigate. This same book was looked into in the Pickens County School system recently by parents and community members. Within the last few weeks, precedence **HAS BEEN SET**, by the vote of the Pickens County School Board, to remove this book and others like it, from the County public school libraries.

The question of being fiduciaries to the public begs the question to you all--- By having this material, at the ease of children to read and review, put the BCSD in any jeopardy of violating Proviso 1.105 and/or 1.93?

There ARE some things being done in this school district that DO in fact violate both of those Proviso's, however, I will not dwell on that issue at the time. I remain interested in the fact that by Pickens County creating precedence, now, you have been given the catalyst to remove this book and any other like it, from the inventory at every public school. This process could be done one of two ways, in my humble opinion. First, announced removal of said books by the school board in an effort to be "forward thinking" and being "proactive", or, by the second means-- through the arduous task of listening to, or participating in, continued public outcry, debate, public social media heroism and any other means available to the public.

I ask you to be proactive. Consider the hard work already done by others, that you can utilize to your favor, and stopping the continued barrage of indoctrination of our children by means that have no business in the public-school setting. A book such as "*Stamped*" or one of its cohorts, may be worth the argument of being a part of critical thinking skills in post-secondary education, but NOT in the K-12 arena. Please, remove this book, and any other like it in the SEL/CRT area from our public school libraries.

My Best-

Michael E Covert
Former Beaufort County Councilman
District 7

[REDACTED]

Mike Covert

[REDACTED]

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