Appeal to the Beaufort County School Board

9 AUG 2023

Book Review Committee Review

Michael E Covert, Appellant

Beaufort County School Board

2900 Mink Point Boulevard

Beaufort, SC 29902

Current Books Appealed: "*The Fixer"; Forever For A Year"; "Felix Ever After"; "Skin"; "A Lesson in Vengeance"; "Court of Frost & Starlight"; and "Court of Wings & Ruin"*

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Chair Gwodz, School Board Members, Superintendent Rodriguez;

Please consider this as my formal appeal to the above referenced books, supposedly reviewed by separate review committees.

I thank you for receiving this appeal, I would think it would be appropriate and professional of all members acknowledge whether or not you are reading these appeals. I have spoken to four (4) members, three (3) have and one (1) has admitted he has not.

I also want to address an "elephant in the room". Some of the more egregious people that regularly attend School Board meetings in an effort to publicly demean me and some of the other citizens who believe such as I; have been operating a smear campaign. Several of them have posted addresses of some folks online; some have made publicly false accusations; all have been derogatory and now several are quoting me on something inaccurately.
In a previous appeal, I QUOTED from a book from an African American female Doctor of Medicine on the subject of books, or, obscenities etc….however you are allowing people to now take it, tweak it, and call it a quote from me. It is those folks who may not have had an experience in holding public office and acts such as this are harmful and unfair. Acts such as this could actually lead to people NOT being involved in this process because of a hard left leaning, politically motivated group's desires and devious plans. I ask you to address this. NOWHERE in my, or the other complainant's Appeals, have we said ANYTHING derogatory or defaming of these people. The same courtesy should be applied.

I also find it imperative to make perfectly clear— my concern in this issue, and my appeal(s) have absolutely nothing to do with politics in any form. There are those bad actors out there that either have tried to make it or will try to make it political. I have not and will not do so. As a matter fact, since the last appeal, those opposing what Mrs. Szalai and I have been appealing as the "complainants", has gone so far off of the rails and that the only substantive result is that it is THEY that are doing this as a form of politicizing the event(s).

While reviewing this appeal, I ask that each of you have a copy of the ***Beaufort County School District Progressive Discipline Plan Student Code of Conduct*** handy beside you. Throughout this handbook, keeping these books on the shelves is violating your OWN regulations set forth for student conduct. How can you enforce regulations of inappropriate materials with irreverent or inappropriate language; obscene language, gestures, writing, comments etc; the possession of pornography; using obscene language; using violence towards people; using violence

towards females; etc--- when you would be glorifying it through the constant use of these materials. The irony and double standards would be deafening.

The books in question are lewd and vulgar. Period. By your allowing these books to remain in circulation for anyone, yes anyone, to pick up—you are purposefully by your own actions, providing lewd and vulgar material to minors. You are prostituting the minds of children, ESPECIALLY, those most vulnerable which by some of your own admission is the minority population of the school system.

It is my contention that these books be removed in totality from the Beaufort County Public School system.

I believe my appeal to be just; to be inclusive of **EVERYONE**, not just a select few. The only rational choice here is to do the following:

- The Appeals I have submitted should ALL BE READ in their entirety.
- The books referenced by me in this set of appeals, are not worthy of being in any part of a child's learning curriculum. There is nothing to be gained in middle or high school from glorifying rape; sexual abuse; sodomy; drug abuse, slavery, prostitution, etc. **If you believe there is, then publicly say that**. It will be the demise of your elected position.
- HAVE ANY OF YOUR READ THESE BOOKS?

During this appeal, it is important to note that the said Review Committee did remove "Forever For A Year' from circulation. That is a good thing. However, more important in this argument is the fact of what you DON'T hear after this. The loud, obnoxious, vile, demonic group that has berated my co-complainant and me; said awful and disgusting things about us both; spread lies and rumors about us both---all because we believe in the removal of these books; HAS SAID ABSOLUTELY NOTHING about the Review Committee pulling now the 4th or 5th book. What does that mean? **THEY-ARE-MAKING-THIS-POLITICAL.** You all are "supposed" to be non-partisan. When are you going to act like that? You all are "supposed" to be against anything lewd or vulgar n relation to school age children. Why are you behaving the complete opposite?

As a friendly reminder, I sent every one of you an email where I put together a substantial compromise to end this. ONLY *TWO* OF YOU had the decency to speak to me about it. How embarrassing is this when the County School Board does not have the common decency to respond to a tax payer, and even more so to one that as a former elected official believes in and has participated in Professional Courtesy towards the School Board.

I continue to believe that a system of OPT IN rather than OPT OUT, placing the onus on the parent, not the librarian or teacher, would be a great compromise for both sides. Would there be a cost possibly to do this? One time yes, but very minor, however you have to ask yourselves--- "What is the worth of the child in keeping them safe?" If you need additional help with the OPT IN suggestion, please feel free to reach out.

I thank you all for hopefully taking the time to read my Appeal in its entirety and ask for your relief in proper ruling of overturning the committee's review for the book's mentioned herein.

Respectfully;

Michael E Covert
[redacted]

To the media of which this has been given a copy of: It is time the media in the South Carolina Low Country and Coastal Georgia markets begin to <u>also</u> share in the news of this subject, as "the rest of the story". There are people on "the other side" making false claims, political attacks and claims for their own edification. There are people on the School Board who think this is a "joke", "not their responsibility", and would rather "cow-tow" to those that are loud and oppressive in lieu of talking with both sides for fear of their political legacy ending abruptly.