From: Gianmarco Antosca <gianmarco@ncac.org>
Subject: Beaufort County School District - NCAC Letter
To: Christina.Gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Christina.Gwozdz@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Cathy.Robine@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Angela.Middleton@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Angela.Middleton@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us <earl.campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
William.Smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us <William.Smith2@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Patricia.Fidrych@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Richard.Geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Richard.Geier@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Rachel.Wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Rachel.Wisnefski@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Melvin.Campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Melvin.Campbell@beaufort.k12.sc.us>;
Ingrid.Boatright@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Ingrid.Boatright@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Cc: Robyn.Cushingberry@beaufort.k12.sc.us <Robyn.Cushingberry@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: November 4, 2022 11:06 AM (UTC-04:00)
Attached: Beaufort County Schools_NCAC.pdf

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.

Dear Members of the Beaufort Board of Education,

Please see the attached letter on behalf of the National Coalition Against Censorship regarding the School Board's removal of almost a hundred books and the District's material reconsideration policy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Gianmarco Antosca

--

Gianmarco Antosca
Youth Free Expression Program Coordinator
National Coalition Against Censorship
Gianmarco@ncac.org
(he/him)

19 Fulton Street, #407, New York, NY 10038
ncac.org

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CENSORSHIP

KIDS' RIGHT TO READ

November 3, 2022

Board of Education
Beaufort County School District
2900 Mink Point Boulevard
Beaufort, SC 29902

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

The National Coalition Against Censorship is an alliance of national nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting freedom of expression, including the rights of K-12 students, teachers, and staff. We are writing in regard to the District's recent decision to remove over 90 books from school libraries before they have been officially challenged. We urge you to return the books to library shelves until such time as a complaint has been filed that meets the requirements of your current policy. In addition, we ask you to reconsider a provision of your policy that allows for the removal of challenged books while they are being reviewed.

According to media reports, the District has initiated the reconsideration process prior to receiving a formal request as required by district policy. As you know, the policy "require[s] complainants to submit complete, substantive, and fully researched challenge requests" (Regulation IS - 38.1). To comply with the policy in this case, the district must require a complaint that provides detailed information about all challenged titles. Otherwise, it may set a dangerous precedent that district employees can ignore policies whenever they think it is convenient to do so. Therefore, we urge you to return the books until formal reconsideration requests are filed.

In addition, we encourage the District to eliminate the current provision that states, "The material in question will be removed from general use throughout the BCSD during the reconsideration process." In our experience, it is in the best interests of the District and its students to ensure that books are not removed from library shelves during the recommendation process. In fact, many districts' policies include an explicit requirement that access to books remain unrestricted during the reconsideration process. For example, Savannah-Chatham Public Schools' policy, says that during the reconsideration process "Materials under consideration will remain in use until a decision has been rendered (Regulation IFBD-R).

A policy that keeps books in the library discourages complainants from filing large-scale meritless challenges for the sole purpose of limiting students' access to ideas they dislike. Therefore, modifying your policy will help the District achieve its goal to "conserve limited staff resources, discourage the monopolization of the challenge process by a few individuals" (Regulation IS - 38.1).

For these reasons, we recommend that you amend your policy. Finally, we are attaching a copy of our Guidelines for Administrators, which includes sample book challenge procedures from school districts across the country.

Please contact us if we can be helpful.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: American Booksellers for Free Expression
The Authors Guild
National Council of Teachers of English

A project of the National Coalition Against Censorship

CO-SPONSORED BY

American Booksellers for Free Expression
Comic Book Legal Defense Fund
National Council of Teachers of English

From: Gianmarco Antosca <gianmarco@ncac.org>
Subject: Question regarding recent book challenges
To: candace.bruder-brasseur@beaufort.k12.sc.us <candace.bruder-brasseur@beaufort.k12.sc.us>
Sent: October 27, 2022 11:53 AM (UTC-04:00)

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.

Hi Candace,

My name is Gianmarco. I work for the Kids Right to Read Program with the NCAC. I just saw an article about the district reviewing a handful of books based on some community complaints.

This article says that parents used a book rating guide to compile their list of books for review. I was wondering if you knew which book rating guide they'd used or where they had gotten those ratings from?

Thank you for your time,
Gianmarco

--

Gianmarco Antosca
Youth Free Expression Program Coordinator
National Coalition Against Censorship
Gianmarco@ncac.org
(he/him)

19 Fulton Street, #407, New York, NY 10038
ncac.org