

**NATIONAL
COALITION
AGAINST
CENSORSHIP** **KIDS'
RIGHT
TO READ**

January 30, 2020

Dr. Boyd Brown, Superintendent
Laramie County School District No. 1
2810 House Ave
Cheyenne, WY 82001

Sent via Electronic Mail to: boyd.brown@laramie1.org

Dear Dr. Brown,

As organizations dedicated to the freedom to read and the application of First Amendment law in public institutions, we were concerned to learn that a parent has challenged the inclusion of *Drama*, by Raina Telgemeier, in the school library at Saddle Ridge Elementary School.

We are writing to urge you to confirm the unanimous decision of Saddle Ridge Elementary School's Building Reconsideration Committee to retain the book. The committee's investigation and statement of reasons for its recommendation were commendably thorough. The committee explicitly addressed the concerns of the parent who issued the challenge; included findings regarding the age levels of students in the state who express interest in reading the book; references to the book's reviews in professional library and teaching journals; and an assessment of the themes of the book.

The committee notes that the parent who issued the challenge has accepted the school's offer to flag the account of the child so that he or she cannot check out material with themes of which the parent does not approve. In addition, the committee endorsed steps to ensure that parents are more aware of what materials are available in the library, and the reasons that those materials are selected. This indicates that the committee understood both that many parents are uncomfortable with their children being exposed to LGBTQ books and media, and also that a single parent cannot dictate that all students must be denied access to that material. The decision thus addresses the concerns of parents, while respecting and honoring their students' freedom to read, to learn, and to grow.

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We have attached for your information a copy of our Considerations and Guidelines for Responding to Challenges to Educational Materials. As noted above, the District and the school Reconsideration Committee seem to have dealt with this issue in an exemplary fashion thus far.

Finally, you might be interested in the following resources, which include reviews of *Drama*, as well as discussions regarding the value of the book, and reasons that common challenges to the book can often be misleading or overstated.

<http://cblidf.org/2019/06/using-graphic-novels-in-education-drama-2/>

<http://cblidf.org/2015/06/adding-drama-to-your-library-or-classroom-collection/>

If you would like additional information about *Drama*, or assistance in helping to keep this important book available, please feel free to contact Charles Brownstein, Executive Director of the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, at 971.266.8212 or charles.brownstein@cblidf.org.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us for support as you work to strengthen procedures to ensure that the rights of all stakeholders are respected and that all parties feel that their concerns are taken seriously when library and curricular materials are selected or challenged.

With warm regards,



Chris Finan, Executive Director
Director
National Coalition Against Censorship



Charles Brownstein, Executive
Comic Book Legal Defense Fund



David Grogan, Executive Director
American Booksellers for Free Expression