

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

December 18, 2020

By electronic mail

Governing Board
Vail School District
13801 E Benson Hwy # B
Vail, AZ 85641

Re: Removal of *Slaughterhouse Five* from the curriculum

Dear Board members:

The National Coalition Against Censorship and the other groups signed below are dedicated to protecting the freedom to read, the First Amendment, and high quality public education. We are writing in regard to a recent challenge to the inclusion of *Slaughterhouse Five* in the curriculum of an Advanced Placement English class at Cienega High School.

As we understand the facts a parent recently complained about the book's language and references to sex, and the district is considering removing it from the approved reading list. A committee will be convened to review the book and make a recommendation to the Superintendent and to the Board regarding whether to retain the book.

We are writing to commend the district for convening a diverse committee of educators and stakeholders to review the book. We would also like to direct your attention to the attached guide for administrators, which discusses our recommendations for adjudicating challenges to curricular materials, including the adoption of clear and objective criteria for assessing challenged works.

We understand that curriculum decisions, particularly decisions surrounding challenged works, are very difficult decisions which can spark strong emotions on all sides, and we have decades of experience helping districts to navigate those challenges in a manner which ensures that all stakeholders feel that their concerns have been heard and considered. Hence, please feel free to reach out to us if we can be of any assistance.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Finan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: American Booksellers for Free Expression
 The Authors Guild
 Comic Book Legal Defense Fund
 National Council of Teachers of English
 PEN Children's and Young Adult Books committee
 Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators
 Vonnegut Library

Cc: Callie Tippett, President
 Jon Aitken, Clerk
 Allison Pratt, Member
 Claudia Anderson, Member
 Mark Tate, Member