

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

November 8, 2021

Board of Education Members
North Kansas City Schools
2000 NE 46th St.
Kansas City, MO 64116

Re: Challenge to *Fun Home* and *All Boys Aren't Blue*.

Dear Board Members:

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 response to a challenge to two award-winning books: *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel and *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson.

It is our understanding that both books have been removed from school libraries pending the outcome of challenges filed against them, despite the fact that the district's regulations state: "The work in question will remain on library shelves and in circulation until a formal decision is made." It is obviously improper for the District to ignore duly adopted Board rules and regulations.

These books may not be of interest for every student. But if every library book was required to serve every student, the shelves would be bare. A library, including a school library, is meant to include a broad selection of books that provide value to students. These books do just that. The District's mission statement calls on the district to "Inspire Lifelong Learning" and to "Embrace Inclusion," and both of these books serve those missions.

All Boys Aren't Blue was named a 2020 Best Book of the Year by Amazon, *Kirkus Reviews*, and the New York and Chicago Public Libraries; it was also called the Best Book of the Summer by *People* magazine and was a Kids' Book Choice Award Finalist. Finally, it has been recognized as a valuable resource for teaching about cultural representation in literature.¹

Fun Home was named one of the best books of 2006 by *The New York Times*, Amazon.com, *The Times of London*, *New York* magazine and Publishers Weekly. *Entertainment Weekly* called it the best nonfiction book of the year, and *Time* named it the best book of the year. In particular,

¹ https://www.teachingbooks.net/clp.cgi?master_id=68459&lf_id=10

Fun Home was lauded by critics for its groundbreaking innovations in two literary genres: the graphic novel and LGBTQ literature,

Therefore, we ask that the District return both books to use until the challenges have been adjudicated, and to instruct all District personnel to comply with District policies in the future.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: The Authors Guild
National Council of Teachers of English
PEN America
The PEN America Children's and Young Adult Books Committee
The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators

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