

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CENSORSHIP

YOUTH FREE EXPRESSION

March 3, 2023

School Board
Northwest Allen County Schools
13119 Coldwater Rd
Fort Wayne, IN 46845

Dear Members of the School Board,

The National Coalition Against Censorship is an alliance of national nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting freedom of expression, including artistic expression and the rights of K-12 students, teachers and staff. We are writing to protest the cancellation of Carroll High School's production of *Marian: The True Tale of Robin Hood*.

As we understand it, Principal Cleve Million received parental complaints about LGBTQ content in the play. According to Superintendent Wayne Barker, the school principal responded by canceling the production because he was concerned about harassment or heckling if the play continued.

This decision sets a dangerous precedent in the school district. As the Supreme Court has noted, allowing the threat of violence to silence speech, often referred to as a "heckler's veto," is inconsistent with freedom of speech because it encourages people to use threats of violence to silence ideas they dislike rather than debating them. In addition, the district is setting a poor example for students, which is contrary to the district's commitment to open-minded debate and student's respect for others.

Therefore, we urge the district to reverse the decision and allow the play to be performed.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co Signed By: The Dramatists Guild of America