

**NATIONAL
COALITION
AGAINST
CENSORSHIP**

**KIDS'
RIGHT
TO READ**

March 27, 2023

School Board
Volusia County Schools
200 North Clara Avenue
DeLand, FL 32720

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 the rights of K-12 students, teachers, and staff. We are writing to suggest an important change to the proposed amendments to your district's Media Selection policy.

Specifically, we are concerned regarding proposed language stating, "Upon review, a principal may direct the removal of material he/she deems in violation of Florida law." The Florida law in question bars material from schools which is "obscene" or "harmful to minors." However, under that law, a work cannot be "harmful to minors" if it, "[t]aken as a whole, is without serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors." Similarly, a work cannot be "obscene" if it, "[t]aken as a whole, is without serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value" for anyone.

Our concern is twofold: First, it is very unlikely that the District's professional educators will select books which meet either of those criteria. Second, the question of whether books have educational value cannot be determined by a single individual; instead, that determination can only be made by a group of the district's professional educators who are experts on what materials are valuable for students.

Therefore, we urge you to amend the proposed policy to require principals to consult experts, including district legal counsel and librarians or teachers who specialize in book selection before deeming material in violation of Florida law.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need any further support.

Thank you for your attention and consideration to this matter.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

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