

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

April 7, 2022

School Board
Iowa City Community School District
1725 North Dodge St.,
Iowa City, IA 52245

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 concerning the District's recent temporary removal of Juno Dawson's *This Book is Gay*. We urge you to return the book to shelves.

As we understand it, after the District received bomb threats, you have decided to review the book and have removed it pending review. This is inconsistent with district policy that states, "materials generally will remain in use pending the outcome of the reconsideration procedure."

We know that this is a difficult situation. However, even temporarily removing the book in response to threats sets a dangerous precedent for the school district. The District's decision will encourage people to continue to use threats of violence to silence ideas they dislike rather than debating them. In addition, by rewarding threats of violence, the District is setting a poor example for students.

Finally, because the book's themes are currently controversial, it is all the more important to follow procedures to the letter. Doing so helps ensure that all parties feel that they have been treated fairly, and that their concerns have been heard and considered by the District.

Therefore, we urge the Board to return the challenged book to library shelves during the reconsideration process.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely yours,



Christopher Finan

Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

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

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