

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

May 9, 2023

Board of Education  
Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools  
1076 N. 37th Street  
Galesburg, MI 49053

Dear Members of the Board of Education

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 protest your district's recent removal of Maia Kobabe's *Gender Queer* in violation of district regulations.

As we understand it, following a formal challenge to *Gender Queer*, administrators decided to remove the book from school libraries pending review by a reconsideration committee. That action is in direct violation of district policy 9130 that states, "The material in question may not be withdrawn from use pending the committee's recommendation to the Superintendent."

The removal is also unwise. Challenges to educational materials are often highly contentious. As a result, it is important that districts adjudicate challenges in a manner that ensures all parties feel their views have been considered and that decisions about educational material are made in an objective, nonpolitical manner. The district's policy reflects these concerns and ignoring it creates suspicion that school officials have acted improperly.

Finally, removing books without following the established procedures encourages meritless challenges to a wide range of books, blocking access to books that students have every right to read during the review process.

Therefore, we urge the Board to return the book to library shelves and to ensure that the proper reconsideration procedures are followed.

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

CC: Superintendent Wendy Somers

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

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Coalition Against Censorship

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