



# Vineland Public Schools

625 PLUM STREET • VINELAND, NJ 08360-3708 • (856) 794-6700 • FAX (856) 507-4325

Charles D. Ottinger  
Superintendent

July 21, 2009

Joan Bertin, Executive Director  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
257 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1504  
New York, NY 10001

Dear Ms. Bertin:

As you know, we have currently been corresponding regarding a situation involving our perceived censorship of the book entitled, *Paint Me Like I Am*, at one of our middle schools in the district. Although I do not agree with the position taken by the National Coalition Against Censorship or the American Civil Liberties Union, I do want to apprise of actions we are taking to insure that this situation and future situations are handled efficiently and fairly to all concerned.

The Vineland Public School District has drafted a selection and reconsideration of materials policy, which we will share with our Library/Media Specialists and our school administrators. The policy includes provisions to establish a committee to review challenged materials and also provides steps for participation and involvement by teachers, administrators, members of the board of education and the community. This policy will be followed for any and all future instances where materials are challenged.

In reference to our present situation with *Paint Me Like I Am*, please be advised that we have purchased a copy of the book, which will be placed on our shelves and available to students. The copy of the book whose pages have been removed has been replaced with a complete copy.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this issue, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Ottinger  
Superintendent

Cc: ACLU  
Dr. Keith Figgs, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Don Kohaut, Principal  
Ross Stanger, Supervisor