

March 30, 2023

Advocates for Inclusive Education: CBSD Policy 109.2 Comparison

Point	Counterpoint
<p>Policy 109.2 does not ban books. (Parents and community groups are better equipped to make policy and book selection decisions than trained professionals.)</p>	<p>The policy will ban books. This policy goes against the advice and suggestions of experienced district library staff and contrary to national professional library association. It violates Supreme Court precedent on viewpoint discrimination. The Board “may not, consistently with the spirit of the First Amendment, contract the spectrum of available knowledge” by proscribing a narrow view of “community values” that limit the books available in a school library.”</p>
<p>It requires books to be age-appropriate for student readers. (What is considered age-appropriate should be determined by parents and community groups, tilting always to the most conservative viewpoints.)</p>	<p>Guided by best-practices in education, professional educators and librarians have always selected age-appropriate materials for inclusion in our libraries. The CB Library Coordinator proposed a policy that followed national standards and did just that. It got rejected.</p>
<p>Requires books to be free of explicit content and graphic depictions of explicit sexual content. (This = pornography = inappropriate in K-12.)</p>	<p>Books in our school libraries are selected by professionally trained librarians according to national guidelines for age suitability. They do not break any laws and are not obscene.</p>
<p>Supports diverse reading options for a diverse body of students. (But there are limits to what children should have access to in a school library and those limits should be drawn by a few parents for all children in the district.)</p>	<p>This policy targets and tilts toward removal of LGBTQ material under the guise of banning “sexually explicit” material. It’s a national campaign. In 2021 No Left Turn “advised challengers to talk about sexual content in the books rather than sexual orientation, sexual identity, or race to avoid legal scrutiny.” Other national groups like Moms for Liberty are also targeting LGBTQ material.</p>

Young adults need top quality fiction and non-fiction in their school libraries to answer their questions about all aspects of life, including sexual matters.

The Supreme Court has held that the school library is intended as a place to test or expand upon ideas presented in or out of the classroom.

Retains the work of classical works of literature.

Protecting the classics proves viewpoint discrimination.

Contains a challenge process if a book is believed to be age inappropriate. (Parental rights extend to other parents' children too. Tax dollars fund the books and therefore taxpayers should have a say in what goes into a publicly funded school library. People do not need to read the books they challenge, they can reference national book banning lists and find tiny portions to object to a book.)

Parents already have the opportunity and a process through which to request their children not be allowed access to certain library books.

Critical acclaim and literary merit are necessary criteria to objectively identify educational suitability. These criteria were removed from this policy.

Requires challenge books to remain in circulation during the challenge process.

Good. It would be illegal to remove them.

Involves a committee of district teachers and administrators to determine the final status of each book. (Cost has not yet been divulged and pay for teachers doing this extra work has not yet been approved.)

Final determination can be overruled by school board. Committees must follow guidelines that do not adhere to best practices in education, which will result in the likely and unjust removal of many books of critical acclaim.

Requires any book deemed age-appropriate to be replaced with another book of the same genre and intended for the same audience of readers. (It's not book banning when the book that's removed is replaced with a similar book. Individual stories and perspectives are not important. It would be better to find an LGBTQ themed book that follows our policy.)

Book removal is book banning. Replacing a banned book with another book of the same genre does not negate the ban, which is permanent. Each author's story is unique and cannot be replaced by another's. **The goal is to add books to provide more representation.**

Learn more:

<https://advocatesforinclusiveeducation.org/freedom-to-read>

References:

“Point” references in bold: <https://www.cbsd.org/cms/lib/PA01916442/Centricity/Domain/4/Learn%20More%20-%202023.pdf>.

(our comments are in regular face and in parathesis)

“Counterpoint” references:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62bde0124f89fd21722b7ebc/t/62dd4223d701ff144dbe3450/1658667555849/ELC_2letters.pdf

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62bde0124f89fd21722b7ebc/t/62e439496758b03004ae220f/1659124041878/Letter+from+A+Texas+librarian.pdf>

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