



Hudsonville Public Schools

Office of Curriculum and Instruction

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Dear Parent(s),

Attached you will find a copy of Hudsonville Public Schools Concerned Parent Book Review Process as well as the Request Form for Reconsideration of a Text. Please carefully read and complete the form in its entirety and return it to the principal at the building where the book was made available to your child.

After the form is completed and returned to the principal, it will be reviewed by the principal and appropriate teacher(s). The principal will then contact you with further questions and/or next steps, which could include, but is not limited to, the book's removal from a classroom or library, reassignment of the book to a more appropriate grade-level, or no action being taken.

To provide you with a bit of background, please know that as a District we believe it is important for parents to have a voice regarding literature choices for their child. We also believe in a student body with varying needs, life experiences, and social identities, students need access to a wide range of books. We respect each parent's right to provide input on what books would be appropriate for their child so we have established guidelines that allow this to occur. We employ a mixed model of reading instruction. Choice reading is used to drive student engagement and build reading stamina. Students are able to choose books from our school library, their classroom library, home, public libraries, etc. While teachers may recommend books based on students' interests, books for choice reading are never assigned. If there are certain books or types of books that a family prefers their child not read during choice reading, this can be communicated directly to the teacher. Book Clubs are structured to build reading comprehension and analysis within a collaborative culture, and we seek to be transparent with Book Club choices in order to give parents opportunities to identify books that are a best fit for their child and family. Finally, any whole-class novel that is studied in depth is done so with the intention of pushing students to deeper understanding of complex texts; whole-class novels go through a formal district approval process.

If you have any questions about the book review process or how best to complete the Request Form for Reconsideration of a Text form, please consult with your building principal. Thank you in advance for your involvement in your child's literacy education.

Sincerely,

Ami Taylor

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction



Hudsonville Public Schools Concerned Parent Book Review Process

Hudsonville Public Schools values the importance of parents' involvement in their child's education. The partnership between home and school is a valuable component of the quality education we work to provide for each student in our district. One of our core values around books, in particular, is that each parent knows their child best and has unique insight into their child's maturity, life experiences, values and interests. We therefore value parental input on what their child reads for their choice reading experiences, both during book clubs offered and independent reading time. We have designed the below guidelines to honor this core value while still operating within legal obligations surrounding removal of books.

If a parent objects to the availability of a text that was made available to their child, they should submit their concerns in writing – utilizing the Request For Reconsideration of a Text form, developed by the National Council of Teachers of English. This form can be obtained from your child's building principal. Please carefully read and complete the form in its entirety and return it to your child's building principal. Then, the following steps will be taken:

- Your Principal and appropriate teacher(s) will review the Request For Reconsideration of a Text form, in conjunction with the legal guidance stating:
 - The District cannot remove books from the library for the purpose of restricting access to differing ideas, such as those related to religion, politics or social issues. (ex. Books may be shifted or removed due to not being age appropriate based on professional reviews but not because they offend one's religious viewpoint.)
- Your Principal will contact you with further questions and/or next steps if appropriate. (These steps may include, but are not limited to, the book's removal from the library, move to an appropriate grade level or no action being taken.)
- If a parent is dissatisfied with the building-level decision, they may appeal the decision in writing to the building principal.
- At that time a District Book Review Committee will convene.
 - This committee should include the following individuals:
 - Teacher(s)
 - Volunteer parent(s)
 - Building administrator(s)
 - A representative from the HPS Curriculum Department
 - The committee should NOT include any individual(s) raising concern(s) about the book. Their written concerns will be discussed in detail by the committee prior to approval or removal of the book.
- The Book Review Committee will engage in the below process to make a final determination regarding continued access to the text in question.
 - Read the book in its entirety.

- Discuss the merits and potential concerns relevant to the proposed book as a whole.
 - Give due consideration to the perspectives of a wide range of cultural and personal viewpoints.
 - Review and follow district legal guidance regarding removal of books.
- Books requested for appeal will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Due to the length of the text being reviewed, the process may take up to 30 days for each text reviewed with consideration for school holidays or other unforeseen circumstances. An estimated timeline for the review of a book will be provided upon receipt of the appeal.
- In the event that the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Book Review Committee, the complainant may appeal this decision, within thirty (30) business days, to the Board through a written request to the Superintendent, who shall forward the request and all written material relating to the matter to the Board.
 - The Board shall review the case and advise the complainant, in writing, of its decision within thirty (30) business days.
- The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction will provide a list of committee reviewed books at a minimum of two times a year to the HPS School Board for review.



Request Form for Reconsideration of a Text (From National Council of Teachers of English)

Please complete the form in its entirety. Any form submitted with incomplete information will be returned for completion.

Author _____

Paperback Hardcover Online

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Website URL (if applicable) _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Complainant represents

(Name of individual) _____

(Name of organization) _____

1. Have you been able to discuss this work with the teacher or librarian who ordered it or who used it?

Yes No

2. What do you understand to be the general purpose for using this work?

Provide support for a unit in the curriculum? Yes No

Provide a learning experience for the reader in one kind of literature? Yes No

Provide opportunities for students self-selected reading experiences? Yes No

Other _____

3. Did the general purpose for the use of the work, as described by the teacher, seem suitable one to you?

Yes No

If not, please explain.

4. What do you think is the author's general purpose for this book?

5. In what ways do you think a work of this nature is not suitable for the use the teacher or librarian wishes to carry out?

6. Are you aware of students' responses to this work? Yes No

If yes, what responses did the students make?

7. Have you been able to learn what qualified reviewers or other students have written about this work?

Yes No

If yes, what are those responses?

8. Would you like the teacher or librarian to give you a written summary of what qualified reviewers and other students have written about this book or film? Yes No

9. Do you have negative reviews of the book? Yes No

10. Where were they published? _____

11. Would you be willing to provide summaries of their views you have collected? Yes No

12. How would you like your library/school to respond to this request for reconsideration?

- Do not assign/lend it to my child.
- Return it to the staff selection committee/department for reevaluation.
- Other – Please explain

13. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a perspective as presented in the challenged text?

Signature _____ Date _____

