



Hudsonville Public Schools

Office of Curriculum and Instruction

3886 Van Buren • Hudsonville, Michigan 49426

Phone: 616-669-1740 • Fax: 616-669-4896

Dear Parent(s),

Attached you will find a copy of the 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 the book being removed (due to not being age appropriate) or reevaluated for the level/class/intended purpose, the book being located in the library with additional oversight when requested for checkout, or the book being retained in its current location for its current purpose.

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 that 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ami Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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:
 - a. The District cannot remove books from the library for the purpose of restricting access based on the fact that it dislikes the ideas contained in the book due to politics, nationalism, religion or other matters of opinion. (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 the book being removed (due to not being age appropriate) or reevaluated for the level/class/intended purpose, the book being located in the library with additional oversight when requested for checkout, or the book being retained in its current location for its current purpose.)
- 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.
 - a. This committee should include the following individuals:
 - i. Teacher(s)
 - ii. Volunteer parent(s)
 - iii. Building administrator(s)
 - iv. A representative from the HPS Curriculum Department
 - v. 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.

- a. Read the book in its entirety.
 - b. Review the Reconsideration of Text Form and building recommendation documents.
 - c. Review professional reviews and publisher's recommended age range/grade levels.
 - d. Discuss the merits and potential concerns relevant to the proposed book as a whole.
 - e. Give due consideration to the perspectives of a wide range of cultural and personal viewpoints.
 - f. Review and follow district legal guidance regarding removal of books.
 - g. Complete a rubric containing district board policy regarding reconsideration of materials and make a final recommendation. The committee will be asked to make one of three recommendations.
 - i. The book should be **removed (due to not being age appropriate) or reevaluated** for this level/class/intended purpose (ie. moved from MS library to HS library or moved from a book club list offering to a building library book). *Committee members would be consulted on final placement.*
 - ii. The book should be located in the library with additional oversight when requested for checkout.
 - iii. The book should be **retained** in its current location for its current purpose.
- 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.
 - a. 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

(Adapted 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 Self ☐ Organization ☐

Name of organization (if applicable) _____

1. If the text is available in the school library, have you requested that your child be restricted from checking out this item from the school library? (Details of this process can be found on the [HPS website](#).)

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Have you personally read the text *in its entirety*? Yes ☐ No ☐

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

Yes ☐ No ☐

4. 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 _____

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

Yes ☐ No ☐

If not, please explain.

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

7. 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?

8. Have you been able to learn what qualified reviewers have written about this work?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what are those responses?

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

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

• If yes, where were these reviews published? _____

• Would you be willing to provide summaries of the reviews you have collected?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11. 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

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

Signature _____ Date _____

FOR HPS OFFICE USE ONLY

To be completed during the building level book review process

Audience (determined by BISAC):

Juvenile ☐

Young Adult ☐

General Adult ☐

Publisher's age/grade
level recommendation

Booklist Review

Reviewed Yes ☐ No ☐ If no, why _____

Recommended age or grade level _____

Kirkus Review

Reviewed Yes ☐ No ☐ If no, why _____

Recommended age or grade level _____

*School Library Journal
Review*

Reviewed Yes ☐ No ☐ If no, why _____

Recommended age or grade level _____

Other (please specify)

Building Level
Decision

- ☐ The book should be **removed (due to not being age appropriate) or reevaluated** for this level/class/intended purpose (ie. moved from MS library to HS library or moved from a book club list offering to a building library book). *Committee members would reach consensus on final placement.*
- ☐ This book should be located in the library with additional oversight when requested for checkout.
- ☐ The book should be **retained** in its current location for its current purpose.