



Mara Gans for FCSD #1 School Board

September 30 at 2:05 PM · 🌐



One of my concerns with our current school board is that they have practiced government overreach- the board has taken choice away from the majority of families in the district and placed it into the hands of a few. This was demonstrated in the summer of 2023, when members of the board voted to revise its 'banned books' policy (IJLA).

Previous practices in our schools gave parents the right to decide which books their students couldn't read. Now, the school board gets the final say.

I believe this is a huge violation of our First Amendment Right to Freedom of Speech. In 1975, the Supreme Court upheld this constitutional right, stating that: "local school boards may not remove books from school library shelves simply because they dislike the ideas contained in those books."

Following the passing of this policy, the majority of our board supported the removal of the award winning young adult book: "Let's Talk About It."

I am strongly opposed to any policy that violates our constitutional rights- and I believe this decision sets a dangerous precedent. What could be removed next?

Around the country, school boards have taken advantage of policies like this to ban classic books, including:

Charlotte's Web

The Lorax

Little Red Riding Hood

A Wrinkle in Time

To Kill a Mockingbird

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

Of Mice and Men

1984

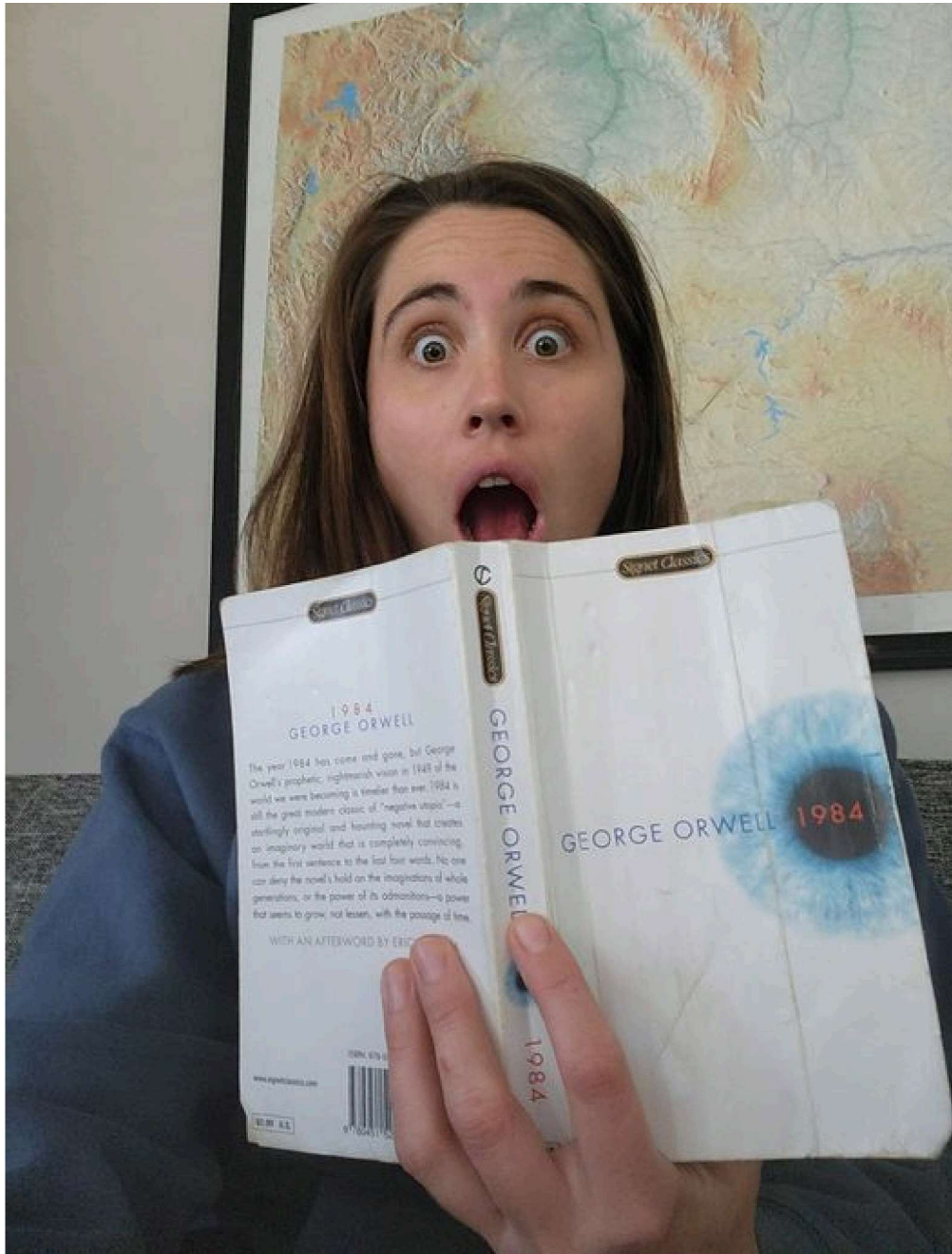
And many, many more.

I am not stating that our board will, or intends to ban these books, but this policy opens the door for a small group of individuals to remove books from our schools without consulting our community. When passing this policy, the board voted against an alternative draft which would have involved greater stakeholder input in decisions about books.

The justification for this policy was "Parental Rights" and "Community Values." I am a huge advocate for parental rights - But parents have rights over their own kids- they don't have the right to take books away from other students. Likewise, the seven people on our school board don't get to decide what the community values of our whole district are. We need policies that recognize the many values in our district, and which don't consolidate power in the hands of a few.

(Continued in comments)





Tiffany Piplica Hartpence, Mara Gans and 36 others

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Author

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(Continued from above): I understand that there are times where schools may need to decide if a book or resource is "age appropriate" - however, in discussions about this policy our current board voted against a process that would have involved the community, through a committee representing parents, students and literary experts. If our board really believed in parental rights and community values, I think it should give the power to choose which books to keep or remove to a committee of individual parents and families in our district.

1w Like Reply Edited 8



Bill Dike replied · 1 Reply



Kaitlyn Roberts

So to clarify, are you okay with the content in "Let's talk about it" being accessible to minors in a school library? Because I'm more than willing to publicly post excerpts from the book here, on your carefully worded campaign post if you'd like. The most important detail you're leaving out is that that specific book contains graphic, explicit material that the majority of the population considers to be pornography.

1w Like Reply 16



Author

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Hi **Kaitlyn Roberts**, I absolutely understand that this book is not for everyone, which is why I believe parents should retain their right to limit books for their own children. However there are parents in this district who believe this book has great literary merit as a resource that teaches students to have healthy relationships, about the value of consent, about reproductive health, and many other topics that are just a part of growing up. This book has additionally received great reviews from many young adult literary journals, and is praised as a great complement to health education. If you would like to read this book in full and sit down and discuss its strengths and weaknesses with me- I would love to, but I don't think we should ever judge a book, out of context, based upon a sentence or two.

Finally, I think there is a lot more to my post beyond just the reference to this book, and I hope you can consider the bigger implications of this policy. If the board leadership were to flip, would you want the board to ban books that are important to you?

For this reason, I believe it is important to keep decisions about books in the hands of a committee of community members, and literary experts, not the board.

Thanks for sharing your thoughts, I'd be happy to chat more in person too, or hear more about your concerns with this policy- 307 438 2742

1w Like Reply

2



Most Relevant is selected, so some replies may have been filtered out.



Reply to Kaitlyn Roberts



Sarah Dike

Did you read the policy? Because it has a pretty detailed procedure that includes the possibility of creating a committee to review material. I feel like this post and others are attempts at creating an issue that has already been resolved. I'm thankfu... **See more**

1w Like Reply 4



Bill Dike

The book isn't banned.
There are millions of books not accessible in the school library.
This book is allowed on campus, just isn't available in the library. ... **See more**

1w Like Reply 8



Scott Jensen replied · 2 Replies



Sarah Reilley

I think it is important for folks to understand book banning and what it actually means.

[https://pen.org/book-bans-frequently-asked-questions/...](https://pen.org/book-bans-frequently-asked-questions/) **See more**

1w Like Reply 3



Melissa Sullivan

Well said! 🙌

1w Like Reply 2



Bill Dike

Mara Gans for FCSD #1 School Board could you please list the places where Charlotte's Web has been banned?

6d Like Reply



Mara Gans for FCSD #1 School Board replied · 3 Replies



Mary LeClair Graf

Well said!

1w Like Reply 2



Susan Butts

Amen. 🙏

1w Like Reply 2



Carla Bennick Norris

Thank you!



2

