

Responding to Challenges

Intellectual Freedom Interest Group * Advocacy Committee
Programming Interest Group * 12.16.21

- US libraries report spike in organized attempts to ban books in schools | The Guardian
- Librarians, educators warn of 'organized' book banning efforts | Publishers Weekly
- Threats and abuse over 'critical race theory' could drive staff out of public schools | Yahoo! News
 - Conservative group offers \$500 for catching a teacher breaking Critical Race Theory law | Newsweek
 - Opinion: The assertion of 'parental choice' in schools is headed in disturbing directions | The Washington Post
 - The movement to remove 'pornographic' books from school libraries, explained | WFTV
 - Schools face parents who want to ban critical race theory – and don't get how teaching works | NBC News
- School board member files police report to have 'All Boys Aren't Blue' removed from school libraries because it's a Black queer memoir | Yahoo! News
 - Potential book ban in school galvanizes 2 sides in day of highs and lows as Sheriff recoils at criminal complaint | Flagler Live
 - Mark Lane: Book banners pull LGBT memoir from the shelves in Flagler | Daytona Beach News-Journal
 - Flagler Sheriff: Controversial book in school libraries broke no law | Yahoo! News
 - On book bans, 'equity' and the school district's duty to honor student diversity: The students' perspective | Flagler Live
- Riverbend High School students hold protest against removing library books | Free Lance-Star
- Book that sparked a statewide schools review won't return to Fort Mill SC libraries | Island Packet
- Anchorage school district bans 'Gender Queer' book from its libraries | Anchorage Daily News
- Wayne Township parents call on school to pull book dealing with LGBTQ+ topics | Connecticut News 12
 - Wayne parents demand removal of 'Gender Queer', six other books from school libraries | NorthJersey.com
- Schools across St. Louis face more attempts to remove books from library shelves | St. Louis Public Radio
- New Jersey school censors student's Black Lives Matter poster in African American culture display | National Coalition Against Censorship
- Governor says Utahns should 'pump the brakes' over banning books in schools | Deseret News
 - Librarians weigh in on school book controversy, Canyons says policy is 'problematic' | KJZZ
- ACLU of Utah statement on book banning and the First Amendment | ACLU of Utah
 - Utah ACLU investigating Canyons School District over book removal | FOX 13
 - Author says book pulled from Utah schools was written to help prevent sex abuse | KSL
- Committee formed to address censorship concerns at city schools | Daily News-Record [Harrisonburg, VA]
 - School district in Harrisonburg, Virginia, reviewing gender queer in school libraries | National Coalition Against Censorship
- Fairfax schools will return two books to shelves after complaints over sexual content | The Washington Post
- Iowa senator calls for felony penalty for distribution of 'obscene materials in schools' | Des Moines Register
 - Iowa senate president vows to prosecute teachers over books | Iowa Starting Line
 - What you need to know about targeted library books in Iowa | Iowa Starting Line
- LGBTQ, sex ed books bring group, protests to Wyoming library | U.S. News & World Report
- Texas book ban would cost school districts millions of dollars in staff time | Book Riot
 - Texas education board chair discusses fight over library books | Spectrum News 1
 - Texas education board rejects textbook amid debate over lessons on sexuality | LGBTQ issues | San Antonio
- When schools ban books | NPR
- A frenzy of book banning | The New York Times
- More Republican leaders try to ban books on race, LGBTQ issues | NPR
- Conservative White parents want the freedom to ban books | New Republic
- Librarians, Educators Warn of 'Organized' Book Banning Efforts | Publishers' Weekly
- "Beloved" isn't the only book parents have challenged. Here's why and how books get banned | CBS News
- Parents and politicians vs. intellectual freedom: The danger of the new book-banning brigades | NY Daily News
- Critical race theory controversy: Bans on some books by Black authors | Market Realist
- Books including 'Gender Queer' being pulled from schools, sparking controversy | ABC News
- Opinion: Say no to book censorship | Los Angeles Times
- George M. Johnson challenges school district ban of book: 'I refuse to be erased' | The Grio
- Craighead County Library's battle against censorship | Book Riot
- South Carolina governor urges banning of LGBTQ books in schools | The Hill
 - Group says governor's call to investigate book 'political attack on LGBTQ youth' | WMBF
 - SC officials should think carefully before banning books | The State
 - Book that sparked a statewide schools review won't return to Fort Mills SC libraries | Herald
- North Carolina is vulnerable to a dangerous new book banning wave [opinion] | Charlotte Observer
- Opinion: Texas librarians are on the front lines in a battle for the right to read | The Washington Post
- After clash over school curriculum, Texas Republicans set sights on library books | Courthouse News Service
 - Texas schools respond to House inquiry on library books about sexuality, race | Houston Chronicle
 - Texas GOP's book hunt mostly targets LGBTQ issues, not critical race theory | Houston Chronicle
 - Penguin parents, anti-bullying tips, teen romance: What we found inside three books flagged by a Texas lawmaker's school inquiry | Texas Tribune
 - GOP-fueled fight over kid-appropriate library books heats up in Texas | Texas Public Radio
 - Parents face-off over graphic content and LGBTQ books in school libraries | NBC DFW
 - Proposed book ban will silence LGBTQ+ community and authors, advocates say | ValleyCentral
- Clear Creek ISD revising practices for student access to books, including 'Sex is a Funny Word' | ABC 13 News
- How a YA oral-sex scene touched off Texas' latest culture war | Texas Tribune
- 'We cannot unread this type of content' – Some Katy ISD parents want 'porn' pulled from school libraries | KHOU
 - Katy ISD removes 'inappropriate' books from libraries after parents express concern | KHOU
 - Katy ISD parents want book audit of district's libraries after claiming they found 'porn' | ABC 13
- Lamar CISD reviewing list of books for inappropriate content | Houston Chronicle
- Denton library cancels story time, citing safety concerns | Denton Record-Chronicle
 - Library's storytime canceled after book selection leads to safety concerns | NBC DFW
 - Republican proudly claims credit after violent threats shut down library's "Rainbow StoryTime" | LGBTQ Nation
- Victoria library board to address controversial books at public meeting | Victoria Advocate [TX]
 - One group wants to see LGBTQ books removed from Victoria Public Library | Crossroads Today
- Keller ISD parents call on school board to remove sexually explicit books or resign | CBS 11 DFW
 - Controversy over children's books in Texas schools continue, as one author says her books are not 'pornographic' | WFAA ABC 8
- League City censorship call an old tune with a new hook | Daily News [Galveston, TX]
- The Ilt: Book ban battle headed for Georgia General Assembly | Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Texas List of Items to Investigate

<https://static.texastribune.org/media/files/94fee7ff93eff9609f141433e41f8ae1/krausebooklist.pdf>

(Access easily at <https://bit.ly/31f56Sz>)

850 items.

Threats of Criminal Prosecution

Increasingly, politicians and activist groups are calling for criminal liability for library collections.

Tweet from Iowa Senate President, November 2021



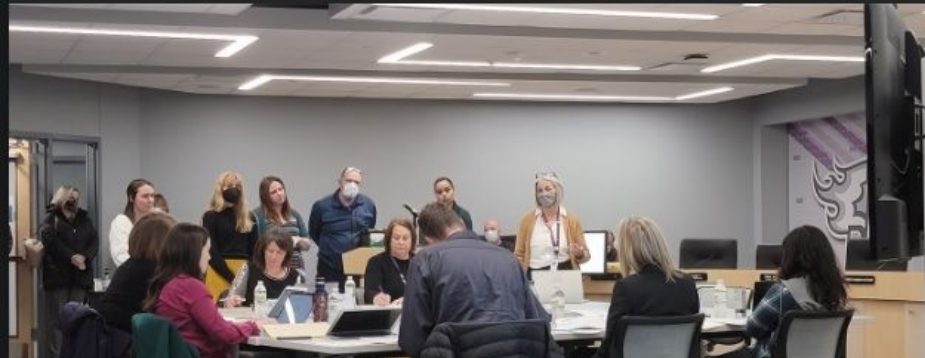
Jake Chapman ✓

17 hrs · 🌐

These are teachers of Johnston School District who are defending the distribution of what I believe to be obscene material and what I believe to be in violation of state law. These are also our so called "mandatory reporters."

Our schools should be one of the safest environments, it's for that reason I have legislation being drafted to create a new felony offense under Iowa Code 728. There will also be additional mechanisms to force prosecutions or allow civil remedies.

[#ReadyForSessionToBegin](#) [#ProtectOurKids](#) [#ItsACrime](#)



The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Local News

Atlanta Mayoral Runoff

Voter Guide

Ahmaud Arbery Verdict

COVID-19

Sports

Press C

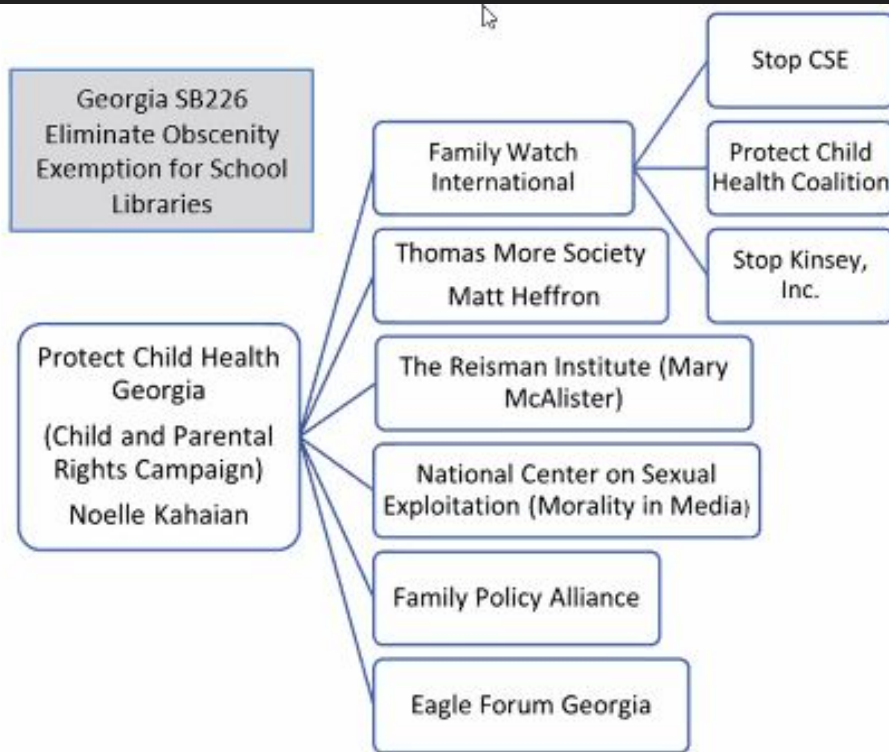
Georgia schools targeted in battle over library books, online content

What's Behind the Uptick?

A rise in action by conservative activists and lawmakers seeking to ban materials they view as being sexually explicit, obscene, or racially charged materials.

This is quickly expanding as a front in the culture war.

The Web of Organizations



How would HB 516 & SB 226 protect students?

HB 516 & SB 226 have been introduced by Sen. Anivitarte & Rep. Karen Mathiak, to remove the allowance in the GA Code for schools that expose K-12 students to obscene materials via library books and online databases. According to GA Code 16-20-102, material is considered obscene if it depicts or describes sexual conduct, i.e., acts of sexual intercourse, masturbation, lewd exhibition of the genitals, sado-masochism, etc.

The following organizations have offered their support for removal of obscenity exemptions for elementary and secondary schools:

Matt Heffron of the Thomas More Law Society -

<https://www.thomasmoresociety.org/>

Attorney Dan Kleinman of SafeLibraries® - <http://www.safelibraries.org/>

Family Watch Int'l - <https://familywatch.org/>

Child Protection League - <https://cplaction.com/>

Justice Society - <https://www.iusticesociety.org/>

Mission America - <https://www.missionamerica.com/>

Alliance to Protect Children - <https://www.alliancetpc.org/>

The Medical Institute for Sexual Health - <https://www.medinstitute.org/>

The Reisman Institute - <https://www.thereismaninstitute.org/>

United Families International - <https://www.unitedfamilies.org/>

Elizabeth Johnston - <https://activistmommy.com/>

United States Parents in Education - <https://uspie.org/>

National Center on Sexual Exploitation - <https://endsexualexploitation.org/>

Georgia Baptist Mission Board - <https://gabaptist.org/>

Family Policy Alliance -

<https://familypolicyalliance.com/about/about-us/georgia/>

Faith & Freedom Coalition - <https://www.ffccoalition.com/>

Eagle Forum Georgia - <http://eagleforumofgeorgia.org/>



ProtectStudentHealthGA.com
[Working with StopCSE.org](https://WorkingwithStopCSE.org)

DID YOU KNOW THAT SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE EXEMPT FROM OBSCENITY LAWS?



It is a crime to distribute obscene material to children in Georgia, EXCEPT in school & public libraries! Help us remove the obscenity exemption for Georgia school libraries and protect our children from being exposed to inappropriate materials as they read and do their school work. Support HB 516 & SB 226!



Overwhelming the System

Emotions are running higher

Hundreds of challenges reported to ALA OIF
this year alone

Challenges take hours of staff time to
investigate and resolve, leading to knee-jerk
responses.

All This Leads to Self-Censorship

Avoiding certain phrases to avoid controversy
(Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ Rights).

Stopping programs on controversial topics.

Avoiding purchasing materials that may cause
problems in the future.

The “chilling effect” of censorship.

“Stop protecting the
media specialists
and start protecting
the children!”

*-Rallying cry of current
censorship advocates*

Let's Get This Out of the Way...



Libraries aren't
neutral.

They never were.

Common Targets

LGBTQIA+ Materials

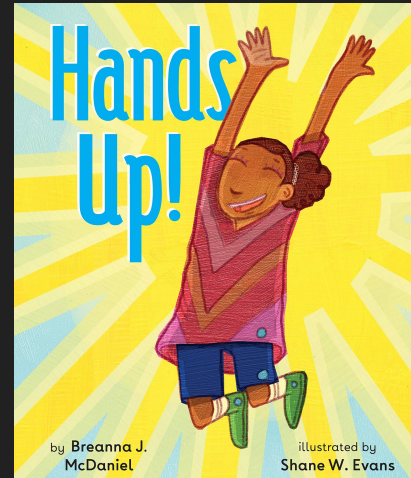
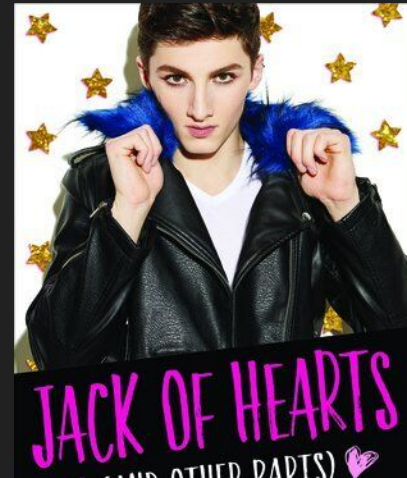
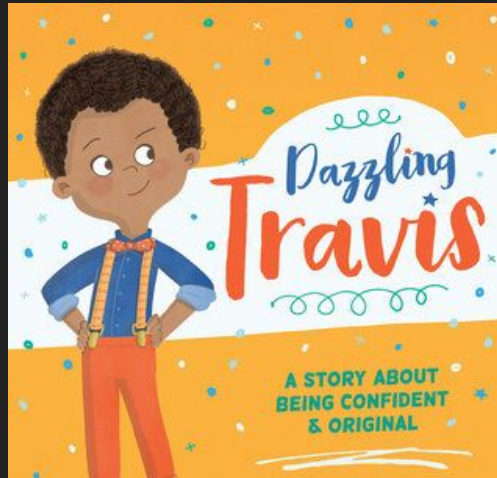
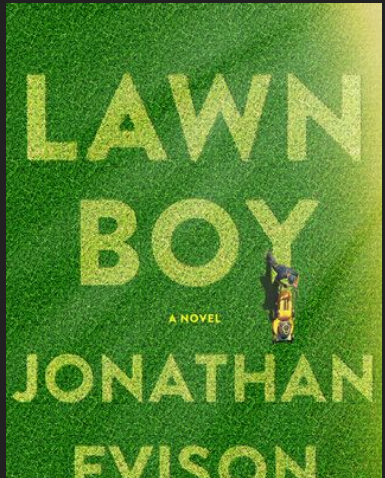
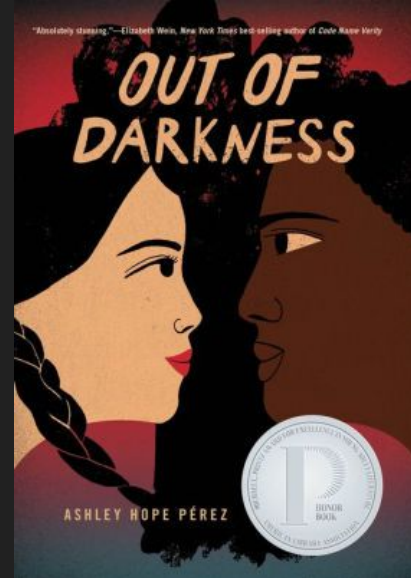
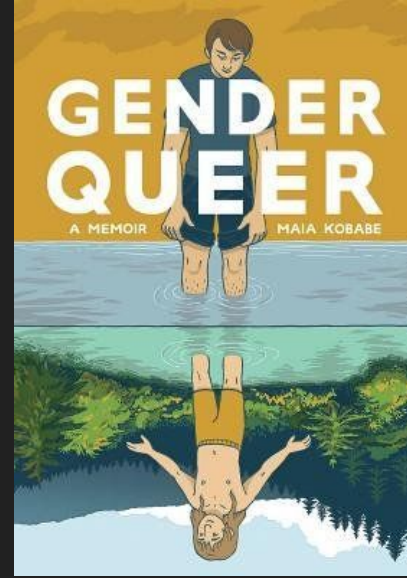
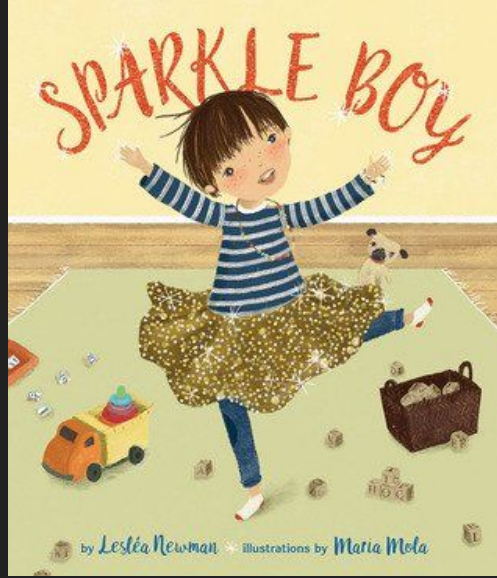
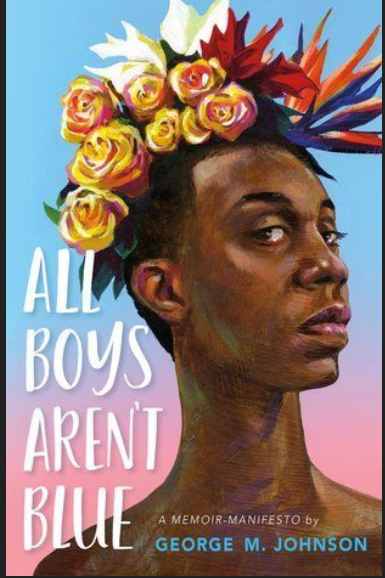
(particularly trans/non-binary materials)

Books by Black authors and/or about the Black experience

(particularly in relation to policing)

Any materials dealing with

non-cisgender/heteronormative romance



Displays and Programs



Public Complaints

To Do Now:

Make sure your policies are up-to-date

Staff and board training

Create your “crisis” messaging plan



Understand Your Market

Not everyone can take up the same fights.

Understand your political context, your support levels, and your institutional context.

Talk to your administrators, boards, funders, and others to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding IF-challenging topics.

Understand Your Power

Go ahead and reach out to your elected officials and state your case.

If you're a parent, be sure to reach out to your school board.

Public Complaints

Resolving in the Moment:

Calmly summarizing the complaint

Acknowledging the concern;
addressing the emotion

Redirecting concern towards ways
you can give them what they want



Practice!

People may be upset.

People may try to record you (legal in the state of Georgia).

Whenever possible, try to de-escalate in the moment rather than giving people the form.

Public Complaints

To Do When a Public Challenge Occurs:

Enlist support (Friends, library supporters, educators, parents)

Work the challenge process

Seek aid from outside groups as needed



Challenge Messaging

Professional library workers make these choices and work hard to match community need.

Challenge processes are already in place at the local level to respond to local needs.

Each parent has the right to control access for their child but not for anyone else's.

Internal Issues

Make sure your policies
are up-to-date

Front-Line/Supervisor
training

Work the process



You Are Not Alone

Reach out for support:

ALA Challenge Support:

<https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport>

ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom:

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/oif>

Georgia Library Association IFIG:

intellectualfreedom@georgialibraryassociation.org

Suit up for the battle!

On non-work time, advocate to your elected leaders to keep library and media center protections in place.

Respond to calls for action on the GLA and other library listservs.