



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

Ad Hoc Challenge Materials Committee Meeting

April 19, 2022

3:00 PM

Curriculum Resource Room

AGENDA

- Review of Challenge to Instructional and/or Media Materials Process
- Challenged Materials
 - Fly on the Wall: How One Girl Saw Everything by E. Lockhart
 - The Bad Guys in The One? by Aaron Blabey
 - Worm Loves Worm by J.J. Austrian
- Good of the Order

BOARD MEMBERS: DEBBIE JORDAN, CHAIR, DISTRICT 4 | MARY FISCHER, VICE CHAIR, DISTRICT 1

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CATHLEEN O'DANIEL MORGAN, DISTRICT 7 | KENNETH A. SAVAGE, Ed.D., SUPERINTENDENT | KATHY DUPUY-BRUNO, ESQ., BOARD ATTORNEY



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Committee Response Challenge to Instructional and/or Media Materials

Committee Meeting Date: April 19, 2022

Date Challenge to Instruction and/or Media Materials Form Received: Per Ad Hoc committee, a recommendation was made January 24, 2022, to review the email from [REDACTED] (sent 10/14/21) with a list of materials, reviewed by the Florida Citizens Alliance, based upon citation of objections referencing violation of State Statute FS 847.012. No form was officially submitted for individual books.

NOTE: To be in compliance with Board Policies, complainant submitted a Challenge Form. See pages 4-5 of this response document.

Submitted by: [REDACTED]

Challenged Material: Worm Loves Worm by: J.J. Austrian

Complainant: Book is being challenged per FS 847.012.

Decision:

- Recommend continued use of challenged material as instructional materials and for media circulation
- Recommend continued use for media circulation only
- Recommend continued use for instructional purposes only
- Recommend continued use of challenged material with the following guidelines:

- Recommend to discontinue use of challenged material during instruction and remove from media circulation





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Additional Comments and/or Notes:

While this book is in media circulation, it is not included in current district curriculum or coursework. Parents may exercise their parental rights within the Parent Bill of Rights and submit an individual request to their child's school for an alert to be placed on the child's Destiny account, identifying the book as prohibited for media checkout.

Voting Committee Members in Attendance:

Director of Elementary School Curriculum & Instruction

Director of Middle School Curriculum & Instruction

Director of High School Curriculum & Instruction

Elementary Coordinator of Mathematics

Coordinator of K-12 Fine and Performing Arts

School-based Administrator Representative Elementary

School-based Administrator Representative Secondary

School-based Media Representative

Curriculum Advisory Representative

Non-Voting Committee Members in Attendance:

Coordinator for Instructional Technology and Instructional Materials - Facilitator

Content Specialist for Instructional Technology and Instructional Materials - Recorder



Challenge to Instructional and/or Media Material

School or District: Lee County Public Schools Date: June 15, 2022

Please check type of instructional material:

Book: _____ AV (Video, CD, etc.): _____ Other (Identify): _____

Title: Worm Loves Worm

Author: J. J. Austian

Publisher or Producer: _____

Request initiated by name: [REDACTED]

Student Name: N/A

Telephone Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip Code: [REDACTED]

It is expected that the material in question has been read, viewed, or listened to in its entirety. Please complete the following questions. If insufficient space is provided, attach additional sheets.

(Please sign your name to each additional attachment)

1. What brought this material to your attention? Public Records Request
2. Did you examine the entire material? No If not, what parts did you examine? Selected Excerpts
3. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific. Cite pages, film sequence, etc.)
Totally inappropriate subject matter for the target age group and against FL law.
4. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material?
Introduction to LGBTQ+ at an age that it should never be introduced.
5. What do you feel might be the result of a student using this material?
Dangerous gender confusion.
6. For what age group would you recommend this material?
The book is targeting an age group that is not capable of understanding the ramifications.
7. In your opinion, is there anything of value in this material?
Yes, but only for certain family situations.
8. Have you read any critical reviews of this material? If so, what? Please be specific. No
9. What would you like the school or district to do about this material? Check your choice.
 Do not assign it to my child
 Other (Please explain) Tag the book to alert the parent to the potential objectionable nature of the book.

[REDACTED]
 Signature of Objector _____ Date (M/D/Y) _____

Please submit to the school principal for review.



Worm Loves Worm is a “picture book” designed for very young audiences and the design of the book is to normalize same sex attraction, and same sex marriage to an inappropriate age group. Here is a quote from the inside cover of the book. “When a worm meets a worm and they fall in love, you know what happens next. They get married! But their friends want to know—Who will wear the dress? And who will wear the tux? The answer is: It does not matter. Because Worm loves Worm. This irresistible picture book is a celebration of love in all its splendid forms.”

The book is written by J. J. Austrian and illustrated by Mike Curato. If you purchase the book you can read the following about the book illustrator: “ Mike Curato is also the creator of the popular Little Elliot series. He and his husband Dan, were married in a very wormy wedding...”

The book which is designed by the writer to appeal to children 4 to 8 highlights the planning of a same sex wedding, asking questions such as: Which one will be the bride? Which one will be the groom? We both can, is the answer. The “cricket” points out “That isn’t how it’s always been done.” Worm answers, “Then we’ll just change how it’s done.”

I am not sure why this book would be allowed in any school considering the target age is covered by recent legislation that would render this book unlawful in the classroom (Parents Rights in Education law). If the book is in the media center, it may find its way into the classroom or classroom discussions. Retaining this book is setting your teaching faculty up for failure.

The families that would benefit from this book should find it in the public library. I would not advocate for the removed of this book if it were not for the recent changes in the law. My preference would be to restrict the book to allow the parent to have the final say, either way.