

News Release: We the People Indian River County & Moms for Liberty – Indian River, FL

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Let's Talk Dirty...

School District to Return Over 100 Pornographic Books to the Hands of Children!

Indian River County, Fla., February 28, 2022 – You read the title correctly. At the February Business Meeting of the [Indian River County School Board](#), the board voted 4-1 to remove only 5 of the over 100 illegal, pornographic books found in the Indian River County School District libraries! Chairwoman Teri L. Barenborg, Vice Chair Dr. Peggy Jones, Brian M. Barefoot, and Dr. Mara Schiff all voted to put pornographic books back in the hands of children; [Jacqueline Rosario](#) was the **only** dissenting vote.

How could this happen? Let's start with the committee reviewing library books put together by assistant superintendent [Richard Myhre](#). On February 15th, 2022, Jennifer Pippin was invited by Mr. Myhre to meet with district media specialists to discuss her concerns about the pornographic books found by [Moms for Liberty – Indian River, FL](#) (M4LIRFL). The meeting was made to appear as an open forum to discuss the concerning books, however Mr. Myhre used the meeting as an opportunity to tell Mrs. Pippin, Chris Allen, and Thomas Kenny that they wouldn't like the results of the committee's findings, and that the main goal was to determine definitions for "age-appropriate" rather than removing illegal books.

During the meeting, Mr. Myhre was asked if the committee meetings were open to the public, he replied "no." At his discretion, the committee was NOT open to the public, because he wanted the media center specialist to have a "safe space" to speak freely during meetings. Mr. Myhre was then asked if members of the community were allowed to join the committee. He again replied "no," because he didn't want any "biased" opinions from the community.

The committee alone made the determination for what THEY felt was "age appropriate" with ZERO public input, ZERO public meetings, and NO further input from M4LIRFL. To top things off, when Mr. Myhre was asked if he and his committee would consider getting a legal opinion about the pornographic books from the state attorney general, Ashley Moody, his response was "no" and implied that her opinion would be biased, because she's Republican.

Though many media specialists listened to M4LIRFL during the meeting, some shook their head, scoffed when we spoke, rolled their eyes, whispered loudly when we spoke, and showed their discontent. How do these types of reactions equal unbiased determinations? How does their assumption of the author's intent equal literary merit? They alone determined that reading about a rape will help students. They alone have determined that when Follett labels a book "adult," that it doesn't "really mean" adult.

Lastly, Mr. Myhre summarized the meeting by saying, "at the end of the day, we'll sleep well [regarding the decisions they've made] with our certificates..." How does certificate training trump parental concerns regarding pornographic content and following state statutes? You don't need a certificate to know that reading about a rape is not appropriate for minors and is pornographic in nature.

What does the school board attorney have to say? In her memorandum to the school district, Mrs. Shaddock determined that:

“If the work taken as a whole contains other serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value, then it is not prohibited under Section 847.012, Fla. Stat, because then it is not deemed harmful to minors.”

View the whole opinion on our WTPIRC [Google Drive](#).

This one and only opinion cited no case law and was used by Mr. Myhre, Superintendent Dr. David Moore, and the school board to establish that rape, bestiality, incest, etc. was not harmful to students as long as the library book review committee determined that the book, as a whole, contained “literary merit.”

What can I do? As of this moment, we’re asking our members to please:

1. Forward this News Release to as many people as possible.
2. Attend and speak the next school board meeting on March 14th, 2022.
3. Write and/or call all public officials representing Indian River County of this atrocity. Suggested emails below.
 - a. SDIRC School Board – EmailBoardMembersAll@indianriverschools.org
 - b. SDIRC Superintendent – David.Moore@indianriverschools.org
 - c. Governor DeSantis Press Secretary – Christina.Pushaw@eog.myflorida.com
 - d. Governor DeSantis – GovernorRon.Desantis@eog.myflorida.com and 850-488-7146
 - e. FL DOE Commissioner Corcoran – Comissioner@FLDOE.org
 - f. FL DOE Chancellor of Public Schools – Chancellor.Oliva@fldoe.org and 850-245-0509
 - g. Senator District 17 – Mayfield.Debbie@flsenate.gov and (321) 409-2025
 - h. Representative District 54 – Erin.Grall@myfloridahouse.gov
4. Be on the lookout for our first ever phone call, Town Hall. Details will be posted on our social media.

We will not give up the fight to remove illegal, pornographic books from the hands of children in the school district of Indian River County. The district may face a fine of 1.3 million dollars for defying Governor DeSantis’s Executive Order at the beginning of this school year. Is SDIRC exposing themselves to further sanctions or fines by going against state statute? No amount of “policy,” “procedure,” or “protocol” justify breaking Florida laws.

Resources:

1. SDIRC library book review committee recommendations: [link](#)
2. Initial News Release regarding pornographic books from November 2021: [link](#)
3. WTPIRC Google Drive folder of inappropriate books with evidence: [link](#)
4. FL state statute 1006.28 Duties of district school board..., Section (2)(a)2.b.: [link](#)
5. FL state statute 847.012 Harmful materials..., Section (5): [link](#)

END

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