



Idaho

**ACLU IDAHO PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST FINDS NAMPA SCHOOL DISTRICT REMOVED 630 BOOKS FROM SCHOOLS FOLLOWING MAY 9<sup>TH</sup> BOOK BAN**

*District Board of Trustees has yet to implement a revised procedure for challenging books, prompting potential legal action*

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**CONTACT:** Jeremy Woodson, [jwoodson@acluidaho.org](mailto:jwoodson@acluidaho.org), 208-315-7822

**BOISE, ID** — According to records produced by the Nampa School District to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Idaho, 630 books in total were removed from Nampa schools after the District Board of Trustees voted to ban the titles on May 9, 2022. To date, the board has not implemented an unbiased and transparent process for evaluating challenged books, which could prompt the ACLU to take legal action.

“We have been anxiously waiting for months to see the Nampa School District Board of Trustees implement a lawful, unbiased book review process and revisit its decision to ban 22 books from district libraries. A new school year has started, and the Board has yet to take action,” said Colleen Smith, ACLU of Idaho Cooperating Attorney. “We are putting the Board on notice that if they do not revisit the book ban, we will explore legal action.”

ACLU of Idaho Legal Director Aadika Singh said “Nampa School Board Trustee Jeff Kirkman has promised all summer to implement a “proper and transparent procedure” for evaluating challenged books, including in an email to a community member produced to the ACLU. But neither he nor any other Trustee has taken the steps to implement such a process or returned the banned books to school library shelves pending an unbiased review of their contents.”

The records produced to the ACLU make it clear that the Board banned the books in response to the complaint of just one community member who admitted to not having read the books herself. Rather, her complaints about the books were “gathered from research from other parents online.” It is unclear whether those other parents were Idahoans or out-of-state objectors. The records also do not show whether those other “parents online” read any of the challenged books.

Book bans violate the First Amendment when books are removed without established neutral criteria or when bans are based on staff and board members’ personal values. School book bans not only limit student access to award winning, educational books, they threaten all citizens’ free and open access to learning.

Meanwhile, from September 18 – 24, the national book community joined together for [Banned Books Week](#), an annual event celebrating the freedom to read. The theme this year was “Books Unite Us. Censorship Divides Us.” From the Idaho Falls Public Library to the Nampa Banned Books Fan Club, to the National Education Association to the Boise Banned Bookmobile Project, readers across the nation and region have united to celebrate creative expression and the right to access information. However, in Nampa, the books banned by the district Board of Trustees in May remain unavailable to students.

ACLU of Idaho Legal Director, Aadika Singh, said “Students in Idaho have the right to make up their own minds about the books they read, with the guidance of their own parents or guardians. Their access to award-winning and educational books should not be limited by the complaints of one parent who failed to even read the books. One parent’s personal values should not be imposed on all students in the district. The Constitution does not permit that.”

[View this press release on the ACLU of Idaho website.](#)

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