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| <p>What is your association with RCPS? Please select all that apply.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the revisions of current School Board Policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Banning sexually explicit material means that my favorite book, the Holy Bible, is out. Please let our teachers and librarians use common sense.</p> | <p>Banning sexually explicit material means that my favorite book, the Holy Bible, is out. Please let our teachers and librarians use common sense.</p> | <p>Banning sexually explicit material means that my favorite book, the Holy Bible, is not allowed. Please let our wonderful teachers and librarians use their common sense.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Remove "filmstrips" from list of acceptable sources. Filmstrips have not been used for years. I left my teaching post in Rockingham County in 1998, and they were no longer used then.</p> | <p>The policy speaks in general terms about applicability based on age then makes a sweeping statement about "sexually explicit materials." Obviously a third-grader should not be reading mature literature not only because of the content but also because the vocabulary, style, and life understanding is beyond his/her ken. However, neither should a book be not used for a high school student because there are sexual experiences or references within it if the book has been reviewed and considered worthy by teachers, librarians and other experts who can judge the whole book and not by people who see only a few references which they find objectional. By no means is gratuitous sexual content acceptable, but some references occur as part of character description or plot development. I found that my high school students were, for the most part, very good at judging content. Certainly parents have always had the right to request an exclusion for their child.</p> | <p>The proposed policy is more cumbersome than it needs to be. Parents should always begin by discussing their concerns with the teacher of their child. Then, if their concerns are not resolved, the principal, subject area supervisor, and others can pursue a resolution. A committee, as recommended, may be necessary in some cases, but applied with the broad brush suggested, it would take an inordinate amount of time away from classroom instruction and school management. I fear that education may suffer. I would suggest that parents and community members make known their interest in being on such a committee and the selections be made from that list. In addition, I have two other concerns with the policy. 1. Parental decisions about their children's education is being stripped away and put into the hands of a committee. This is taking in loco parentis to an extreme. 2. If a book is excluded from an elementary school classroom or library, as per the policy, it is removed from all schools, including high schools.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>-The definition for “sexually explicit” in the VA code refers to what government workers can view on their government-owned computers. It is not intended to apply to literature. It seems that VA Code (§ 18.2-390 in its definition of that which is “harmful to juveniles” would make much more sense in this context. -The Miller Test would also be an appropriate way to determine whether materials should be considered obscene. -What happened to the policy that was written by RCPS librarians? How were their voices honored in the writing of this one? If possible, it would be helpful for the public to see that policy as well. They are our experts, and they reflect the values of Rockingham County (not Hanover County).</p> | <p>-The fourth bullet point refers to “each school’s reading program.” Historically, this has included time for independent reading where students are encouraged to pursue their own interests. This policy and its vague definitions will detract from that part of the reading program. -To “promote critical thinking skills,” the seventh bullet point, students must read widely. Again, limiting books will make this more difficult, particularly for those families who can’t afford to buy books or do not have access to the public library. This could become a very serious equity issue. -For “a wide range of ability levels,” the eighth bullet point, you must assume that there are high school students who can read and handle adult literature. This is particularly true of AP and Dual Enrollment students who would be negatively impacted should their access to literature be curtailed. -“Leisure reading” for students means they are choosing what to read. Students want to see themselves in the literature they choose to read. Teenagers deal with many issues, and they should have access to literature that might help them deal with those issues. Shielding them from the literature will not make those issues go away. -What is the Massanutten Regional Library’s age classification system? I looked through their collection policy, and I could not find that defined. But I did see this: “Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them. Libraries and their library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.” -There seems to be an undue burden on teachers and librarians to identify works with “sexually explicit content.” The definition is vague and open to interpretation. A teacher who understands the term one way may deselect books that another teacher would not because he/she understood the term a different way. This creates an equity issue because some students will have access and others will not. -The process of deselecting (which has already happened to the books you have taken from RCPS classrooms and libraries, and which did not follow any current RCPS policy) does seem to go against Governor Youngkin’s own understanding of law: “Current law unequivocally affirms that the adoption of these model policies by a school board should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools.” -The ideas presented in these policies seem to go against the findings in the Supreme Court Case, Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico: “The First Amendment imposes limitations upon a local school board’s exercise of its discretion to remove books from high school and junior high school libraries.”</p> | <p>-For the books that have already been removed, where are those complaints? On what grounds were they removed? These questions have yet to be answered. -What is wrong with our current system? A parent has access to lists of required texts (and can ask for a replacement text), they can opt in to see what their child is checking out from the library, and teachers are required to notify parents when students are reading (what the teacher deems to be) possibly objectionable materials. A parent can challenge a book. A parent can talk to a kid’s teacher, a kid’s principal, etc. There are so many ways to have solid communication between parties. What isn’t working? -Why are their separate processes for complaints? This seems confusing. It also makes one kind of complaint seem way more important than another kind of complaint. -Parents can object as far as what their own child can read. Why should parents (or the superintendent, or the board) get to dictate what OTHER children can read? Where are the rights of those parents? -How can you make sure there is no bias in the appointing of the CRC? -Why is there no mention anywhere of a requirement to read texts for which there are complaints? How can one “rule” on a book without reading it in its entirety?</p> |

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| <p>Administrator</p> | <p>"Sexually explicit content" means (a) any description of or (b) any picture, photograph, drawing, motion picture film, digital image or similar visual representation depicting sexual bestiality, a lewd exhibition of nudity, as defined in this policy, sexual excitement, sexual conduct or sadomasochistic abuse, as defined in this policy, coprophilia, urophilia, or fetishism. Instructional materials shall not be designated as sexually explicit based solely on the sexual orientation of the characters therein."</p> <p>1. This is the definition of "sexually explicit content" copied from our school board policy manual. I understand what the new policy is saying, but many of the books we have already removed do not meet this criteria. This will cause some confusion. Do we use this definition? Or is there a new definition forthcoming?</p> <p>2. When it pertains to movies we have been given some latitude with PG-13 movies at the high school level in the past. I'm assuming this is no longer the case? Romeo and Juliet wouldn't meet this criteria (maybe?).</p> <p>3. Many of the terms in this can be interpreted in widely different ways. A room full of adults couldn't agree on what "sexual excitement" means. This hasn't been an issue up until now, but since we are asked to enforce this we will need some additional clarification on what that means.</p> <p>Ultimately, my assumption is that you want us to err on the side of caution. That being said, I don't want to inundate the review committee. Based upon what has already been removed I do not have a clear or consistent understanding of what is being looked for.</p> | <p>If teachers or librarians are aware of any supplementary material, regardless of format, that is currently in their classroom library inventory or school library inventory and that contains sexually explicit content, the teacher or librarian will submit the supplementary material to the Content Review Committee consistent with School Board Policy IIABB and follow the procedures provided in Policy IIABB.</p> <p>This section of the policy concerns me the most. As I stated earlier, I do not have a clear picture of what I'm supposed to be "deselecting" by submitting that material to the Content Review Committee. Based upon the current climate, I do not feel like we will be given grace if we overlook something that is not objectionable to us that may be viewed as objectionable by someone else.</p> | <p>I have no feedback on this particular section.</p> <p>Overall, we are in a very gray area. People's individual politics and preferences will determine what they view to be objectionable or not. A number of books, videos, and reading selections could be challenged if looked at through a lens influenced by current social hot button topics. I do not share the concerns about reading selections that we have already removed that others clearly have.</p> <p>As an employee, I will separate my personal feelings from my professional practice, but I strongly disagree with how this was introduced and implemented.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>"Librarians" are also "teachers", so this distinction is redundant. More importantly, I have concerns over a blanket restriction on "sexually explicit content" as defined by the referenced code, as it relates to a piece of literature containing a relevant description that may fall under this category. Without referencing a specific novel, as to not bog the discussion down to a specific excerpt, there are subject matters worth exploring at the high school level that may involve such descriptions. For instance, a book where the character experiences rape or attempted rape. The National Institute of Health (NIH) estimates that 40-60% of all rape victims are under the age of 18. It can be reasoned that a library's inclusion of materials that deal with this difficult subject matter are important within a high school setting, as they raise awareness. I would suggest that, much in the same way that a book can be challenged for exclusion, librarians should retain the right to challenge a book for inclusion; such that if their merit is deemed sufficient by the committee, the book should have a place on the shelves (that is, committee can be summoned for review prior to a book being included).</p> | <p>Again, blanket prohibition of "sexually explicit material," regardless of content or tone, appears to be an open door to ban literature that has merit and should be available to children of a certain age (high school). As previously mentioned, subject matters relating to rape awareness (including statutory and date rape) are important for the age range must subjected to being victims. Additionally, such restriction would open certain religious text (including the Christian Bible; re: Ezekiel 23) to be removed in kind, or open the County to potential liability for showing favoritism to said religious texts. These are the types of unintended consequences that often arise through blanket ban policies that do not open the door for merit-based inclusion. An alternative would be to state that sexually explicit material shall be flagged in the digital catalogue, and allow parents the right to restrict access to any materials flagged as such. This would preserve access by the majority to those texts otherwise deemed importantly available by the remaining parents and teachers (given the Board's stated preference for parental choice, this seems like a reasonable compromise).</p> | <p>1) "Review the challenged supplementary materials" (2nd paragraph) is ambiguous, at best. Better to state that the CRC will read the challenged text in full (not just excerpts) prior to reaching a recommendation. 2) Is the complaint form drafted yet for review? Will we receive opportunity to review this form as part of the process? 3) Procedure 1 states that the principal will assist "by using" the form. Is the principal expected to fill the form out themselves using verbal direction from the complainant? Better to state that the principal will provide direction for the complainant to fill out and submit the form. 4) The CRC appears to be imbalanced toward parents vs those that have been trained in the subject matter of children literature and education. As the report will be given to the superintendent for them to prepare their own recommendation, I'm not sure what purpose the asst. superintendent has on the CRC. Suggest revising to 3 librarians, 1 supervisor, and 3 parents (inclusive of the PAC rep). Could alternatively balance as 2 librarians, 1 supervisor (3 staff total), the PAC rep, and 2 at-large parents. This is an even number, but as their recommendation is not final, a split vote is immaterial. A split vote would then be forwarded to the superintendent to provide a singular recommendation to the Board. 5) The general format of the board having final decision will certainly open up book inclusion decisions to political winds, which change from term to term. Seems unnecessary, and in effect minimizes the importance of the CRC. If the CRC is to have value, would suggest stating that if the CRC and Superintendent share the same voice in recommendation, the Board shall adhere to the decision unless new, pertinent material/information comes to light following the initial recommendations. Prediction: if the written policies are left unaltered, texts such as (but certainly not limited to) the Christian Bible will be used as political toys, finding themselves inserted one day and removed the next. 6) why is there a separate committee for materials that do not contain sexually explicit materials vs the CRC? Is the CRC not capable of reviewing all complaints that make it thus far? Being that there have been so few in previous years, seems unnecessarily cumbersome to enlist an entirely separate committee for what is essentially the same task of reviewing material content. And why is this separate committee again imbalanced between parents and professionals? There is a significant mistrust of staff being displayed in the committee make-ups presented here. 7) Why is there again a separate "division level committee" vs the CRC? it has the same make-up as the CRC, but goes under a different name, but without reason stated. 8) Why is the appeal process established for non-sexually explicit content vs the process created for sexually explicit materials? Seems obtuse to have 2 different processes for what could easily be a single process with a single committee. 9) There should be established criteria for the committee, Superintendent, and/or Board to base their decision on for inclusion or removal of materials following a formal complaint. Otherwise, this policy will also be abused on the basis of political influences (e.g., removing a presidential candidate's biography because they feel it is</p> |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>"Materials selected for supplemental use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used, or otherwise available in the school library or classroom library for supplemental use."</p> <p>First point of clarification--does this mean that no books in my classroom library (on my bookshelf) can be for purely aesthetic purposes? So, for instance, I am going to need to have a book-like Little House in the Big Woods-removed because it doesn't relate to my content?</p> <p>"Supplemental materials are those non-instructional items, regardless of format which are used to assist the teaching and learning process and include but are not limited to such items as school library books, classroom library books, magazines, newspapers, charts, pictures, certain workbooks, kits, videos, film strips, and games."</p> <p>Second point of clarification--what is the definition of "non-instructional." The wording here is awkward. How can supplemental materials be both "non-instructional", but are then, "used to assist the teaching and learning process?" The statement seems contradictory. If materials are used to assist the teaching and learning process, wouldn't they then be considered "instructional." Is this policy defining "non-instructional" as anything outside the core curriculum?</p> <p>Third point of clarification--Furthermore, does this mean any article or a decodable books/authentic text I share with my students from Readworks or other supplemental sources (i.e., SPIRE, 95% Phonics, or other supplemental programs already available to teachers) would have to be on a list? (None of these materials are sexually explicit.)</p> <p>Another point of clarification-If I share a photo of a plain (grassy field) and a plane (airplane) to teach word nuances-like homophones-that isn't included in the core curriculum, would I have to have that picture approved or placed on a list? Another example-I was teaching the spelling of words with "ew" to my students, and I had them spell the word, "shrew." I said, "like a small rodent." None of my students had seen a shrew before, so I showed them a picture of an elephant shrew from the National Zoo-it's a small rodent, that looks like a mouse. Would I be required to get this photo approved in advance or within 30 days of using it? (None of these materials are sexually explicit).</p> | <p>"Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection."</p> <p>Comment-Organizing and reviewing these lists and materials would be very demanding and a full-time job, in itself, for principals on top of the work they do each day.</p> <p>Point of clarification: If a designee is chosen, what are their mandatory qualifications or expertise to be in such a position?</p> <p>Point of clarification: If a designee is chosen, will that individual be paid a salary or stipend to do this work? If so, is that included in the fiscal budget for SY24-25?</p> | <p>"2. The Superintendent or designee will convene the CRC to review the challenged supplementary material, prepare a written report, and submit its recommendation to the Superintendent. The CRC shall include seven (7) members, including: (i) a school librarian or teacher; (ii) an Assistant Superintendent; (iii) the Supervisor of Media Services; (iv) a member of the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee; and (v) three (3) parents, guardians, or other community members. The CRC will be appointed by the Superintendent at the beginning of the academic year and it will serve for the duration of that academic year including through the summer. The CRC will have up to ninety (90) days to review the challenged supplementary material and provide a recommendation to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will review the CRC's recommendation and provide his or her own recommendation to the School Board."</p> <p>Point of clarification: The above language notes that the Superintendent will appoint CRC committee members. How will these representatives be selected? What is the process or qualifications for selecting members?</p> |

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| <p>Librarian, Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>"Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection."</p> <p>How will a list of new acquisitions be submitted? Will this be an online document available for viewing on each school's website? Will this be a paper document parents can request to see in person through a meeting with the principal or designee? Would this include not only books, but maps (charts), games (chess, board games, card games, puzzles, etc.), vocabulary materials and games created by the teacher not included in the textbook series, worksheets, graphic organizers, class notes, scavenger hunts, breakouts, task cards, classroom magazines such as Scholastic Storyworks, works of art and classroom decorations, supplementary skill workbooks for struggling learners, PE/recess equipment, hands on materials for science experiments, food items, guest speakers and the materials they use, or any resource the teacher may have located on the internet to use in supplementing his or her lesson? I have already witnessed teachers pack up their classroom libraries, not because they think there is anything wrong with the materials, but to protect themselves from public scrutiny or worse. As a teacher I am constantly adding new items to my classroom to scaffold my instruction and increase student understanding, not just books. Please consider narrowing the scope of the definition you are applying when asking teachers to submit a list of new supplemental materials. I worry many teachers will stop buying games, equipment, remediation resources, etc... out of fear of retribution or scrutiny and because the workload of logging every item would be impossible to maintain on top of an already heavy workload. We do not want teachers straying from best practice because of this policy.</p> | <p>"Sexually explicit content" is defined in Virginia Code § 2.2-2827 and School Board Policy IIA.</p> <p>In order to help teachers follow policy guidelines with fidelity, it is important to include the courts' interpretation of the word "lewd" as it applies to the Va Code definition of "sexually explicit". In <i>Pederson v. The City of Richmond</i>, 219 Va. 1061, 1065 the Virginia Supreme Court maintained lewd to be a synonym of lascivious and defined the term to mean "a state of mind that is eager for sexual indulgence, desirous of inciting to lust, or of incident sexual desire and appetite." Board members and staff must understand that sexual situations or nudity contained in supplementary materials must meet the definition of lewd to be considered sexually explicit per Va Code. For example, the Va flag has an exposed breast which meets the definition of nudity, but is not lewd. Therefore, the Va flag, and books containing its image should not be considered sexually explicit. Other examples of sexual situations or nudity contained within supplementary materials that do not meet the policy or court definition of "lewd" include, but are not limited to, items that teach about or discuss human trafficking, materials dealing with sexual assault, religious texts such as the Bible that discuss sexual acts including Samson and a harlot in the book of Judges, Lot sleeping with his daughter in Genesis, Reuben laying with Bihah in Genesis, Aholah in Ezekiel, etc... The aforementioned items were not written with the intent of inciting lust or sexual desire and therefore would not be subject considered sexually explicit despite their inclusion of sexual acts.</p> <p><i>Frantz v Commonwealth</i>, 9 Va. App.34, <i>Freeman v Commonwealth</i>, 223 Va. 301,311, <i>Foster v Commonwealth</i>, 6 Va. App. 313, 329 held the same definition of "lewd" to mean lascivious.</p> <p>The Board should also include <i>Miller v. California</i> as a cited court case which maintains works must be considered as a whole. Context is important. Materials related to sexual assault, slavery, and human trafficking must be considered in context. Context is essential in determining if a work is considered lascivious/ lewd.</p> <p>"Reference to the Massanutten Regional Library age classification"</p> <p>Please provide clarity on this point. Are you referring to an item's location within Massanutten Regional Library such as Juvenile, Young Adult, Adult? The classification at Massanutten Regional Library(MRL) does not necessarily determine content appropriateness. Many non-fiction books, including those related to hunting and fishing, are not located in the Juvenile section at MRL, but they are still collection appropriate. The Bible is also not listed as being in the Juvenile or Young Adult section at MRL. Please clarify what expectation is meant by this policy point.</p> | <p>This policy does not establish guidelines or procedures for the Content Review Committee regarding guidelines for the CRC when reviewing the materials. It is imperative the CRC be required to read works in their entirety before making a recommendation. Va Courts have held "lewd" to mean lascivious. It would be impossible to determine the intent of a supplemental material without judging the work as a whole. <i>Miller v. California</i> maintained obscenity to be interpreted as "(b) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and (c) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." Please add to the "Sexually Explicit Complaint" form that the complainant must read the entire work in question, and clarify that the CRC will read each work in its entirety as well.</p> <p>The appointment of the CRC committee members is concerning in that appointment leaves a lot of latitude for bias. The intent of the policy is to provide for parental choice in their child's education. Parents did not choose the superintendent, yet he or she is creating a committee that could potentially remove a parent's choice to allow their child access to materials. This committee seems to empower only 4 parents, and takes the ultimate decision making out of the hands of thousands of RCPS parents. Please consider guidelines for how parents will be selected. Can parents apply to be on the committee? Can one parent from each attendance district be a consideration so the diversity of our community is better reflected? What recourse would a parent have if they feel the Board misapplies its own policy and removes a book deemed sexually explicit but does not hold to the Va Code definition of sexually explicit?</p> <p>Instead of 1 teacher or librarian, the CRC should have 3 licensed teachers and/or licensed librarians. One from the elementary level, one from the middle school level, and one from the high school level to ensure all grade levels of our school system are represented. Furthermore, materials in question should remain on the shelves until a decision is reached. Pulling items before a review comes across as "guilty until proven innocent," not "innocent until proven guilty."</p> <p>Will there be a stipend for staff members on the CRC? It seems to reason that a great deal of time would be needed, outside of school hours, to read multiple works of literature and meet as a committee. No staff member should be expected to do this without compensation.</p> <p>It is reasonable to prohibit sexually explicit materials from elementary schools and limit them in middle schools, but they should not be prohibited entirely at the high school level. RCPS high schools serve students through the age of 21 in some cases. Many high school students, especially 18-21 year old students, are capable of reading such materials. They are able to serve in the armed forces, drive vehicles, hold a job.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>"Supplemental materials are non-instructional items" seems incorrect. Supplemental materials are often used for instruction.</p> | <p>The "Deselection of Sexually Explicit Content" is clearly a politically motivated disaster for our school district. Please reconsider including this portion.</p> | <p>1-Each person needs to read the book/material before making a recommendation. 2-Only RCPS parents/guardians of a current student can complain. Correct? 3-Is the current policy for books/materials the same as this policy for supplemental materials? 4-Please ask principals, librarians, teachers, and other employees to list and report the number of hours used to complete these additional tasks.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>"Supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content, as that term is defined in Virginia Code §2.2-2827 and School Board Policy IIA, are prohibited."</p> <p>This is problematic as it goes against what governor Youngkin stated in his explanation of the veto of SB235 last week. He said none of the laws/codes that are in relation to sexually explicit content are to be used to ban or censor materials in our public school libraries (the veto was because that clause already exists in the VA code). Therefore you are directly violating the code by having this part in the policy!!!</p> | <p>First it is once again ironic that this board who adamantly claimed that "instructional material" policies did not apply to library materials, yet they chose to use instructional materials policy definitions to decide what "sexually explicit" means.</p> <p>And said definition in that policy (now also used in this new draft policy), is part of the Virginia code/law that Governor Youngkin just wrote a response on in reference to his veto of SB235 last week. He stated that the proposed clause was redundant because the code/law already states that nothing in the creation of "instructional materials" policies can be used to justify censoring/banning books in our school libraries!!! You are therefore violating the law by attempting to censor/remove things based on the definitions in those Virginia laws/codes.</p> <p>This policy disregards the context of the supposed "inappropriate" content. Matt Cross has stated he doesn't want our county to turn into florida with massive lists of banned books, yet this new proposed policy will do just that. The amount of books that could fit that overly broad definition of "sexually explicit" is ridiculous. It eliminates books that discuss important historical events, award winning pieces of literature, socially relevant issues facing teens today, etc. It disregards the fact that even books that portray things like sexual pressure from peers in a positive way would be taken off shelves.</p> <p>Also, since some people who spoke at the last meeting in support of this policy don't seem to know the actual meaning of certain terms, "obscene" and "sexually explicit" are NOT interchangeable!!!</p> <p>"Certain types of sexually explicit expression are not protected. Obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment. Obscenity is a narrow category of unprotected expression that meets all of the following criteria: (a) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; (b) the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and (c) the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value."</p> <p>A majority of the books the board wants to remove do not pass the obscenity test. The board should be concerned about obscenity, not the overly broad definition of sexually explicit. That definition allows for the importance of context because context does in fact matter, even if this religiously biased board fails to understand that.</p> | <p>Again it's ironic that this board who adamantly claimed that "instructional material" policies did not apply to library materials, yet they chose to use instructional materials policy definitions to decide what "sexually explicit" means.</p> <p>And said definition in that policy (now also used in this new draft policy), is part of the Virginia code/law that Governor Youngkin just wrote a response on in reference to his veto of SB235 last week. He stated that the proposed clause was redundant because the code/law already states that nothing in the creation of "instructional materials" policies can be used to justify censoring/banning books in our school libraries!!! You are therefore violating the law by attempting to censor/remove things based on the definitions in those Virginia laws/codes.</p> <p>This policy disregards the context of the supposed "inappropriate" content. Matt Cross has stated he doesn't want our county to turn into florida with massive lists of banned books, yet this new proposed policy will do just that. The amount of books that could fit that overly broad definition of "sexually explicit" is ridiculous. It eliminates books that discuss important historical events, award winning pieces of literature, socially relevant issues facing teens today, etc. It disregards the fact that even books that portray things like sexual pressure from peers in a positive way would be taken off shelves.</p> <p>Also, since some people who spoke at the last meeting in support of this policy don't seem to know the actual meaning of certain terms, "obscene" and "sexually explicit" are NOT interchangeable!!!</p> <p>"Certain types of sexually explicit expression are not protected. Obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment. 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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>"Supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content, as that term is defined in Virginia Code §2.2-2827 and School Board Policy IIA, are prohibited." This statement is deeply problematic. It does not allow for any context for the sexually explicit content. The definition provides for sexually explicit content says it includes any description of sexual conduct, so under this blanket statement, you can not allow Bibles in schools because there are many descriptions of sexual conduct in Bibles. You need to make some caveat for context and/or purpose or value. For example, you could follow the above statement with, " except when the context and value of the material justifies it's inclusion."</p> | <p>"parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." I agree with you and celebrate our American commitment to the rights of all. I believe this includes my right to have books with sexual content available to my child if it's age appropriate and serves value for their learning. For example it might describe sexual harms done during war, done to slaves, or done to women and this knowledge might help deepen awareness, widen perspective, and/or provide better context for opinions, events, responses, viewpoints, etc. A full bann on all sexual content serves only those that don't want their children exposed to that content. They have the right to limit exposure to their children, but not at the expense of my right to have these materials available to my children. For these reasons, it serves everyone's rights better when the process relies on parent control of their child's access instead of on blanket banns.</p> | <p>I strongly disagree with the need for two different processes for challenging materials. When I measure the differences, it appears the school board does not trust the teachers ad principals to handle initial complaints/concerns related to materials with sexual content. My opinion is that the second process-- the process for challenging supplemental materials, should be used for all challenges including those concerning sexually explicit material. We should be encouraging face to face conversations with teachers, staff, and principals, and parents instead of jumping to review committees and school board decisions.</p> <p>I am also concerned that these policies do not make explicit what community members and what parents would be selected for the the review committees. This seems like an open opportunity for stacking the committee with people you know will see the materials the way you want them too. In other words, Indo not see you making efforts to ensure equal rights, impartiality, or diverse representation.</p> <p>I am very disappointed (sad, hurt, angry) that you have not presented us with policies that strengthen a parents ability to manage their child's access while not limiting access to others. Blanket banns and the final authority resting with the school board lacks humility and sets our county up for partisan divides, political tug-of-wars, and policies that get changed with every new school board. Put the power and rights in each individual parent. Strengthen our rights by presenting us with a policy that is primarily about making it easier and more transparent for parents to limit and manage access for their children. Please! It will serve your goals and quiet the opposition. And it is fundamentally more focused on every parent's rights.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>"The school board delegates the responsibility for the selection and use of supplemental materials to the individual schools." This should instead say the school board delegates the responsibility to teachers and librarians in order to better align with the sentiments in the sentence that follows. Additionally, this wording does not align with the wording in School Board Policy IIABB, which could potentially open the door for teachers to be further stifled by a School Board that places politics ahead what is truly best for its students. Pushing political agendas does nothing but further hurt the already marginalized groups in our community.</p> | <p>It's interesting to me that part of the claim that the School Board wants to enrichment student learning is that this can be done by "supporting leisure reading by students," yet they are turning to censorship, banning books students can connect to and see themselves in, and essentially endorsing a modern day "book burning." The hypocrisy of the School Board is only further proven by this document.</p> | <p>RCPS is taking about 20 steps backward by allowing the complaint of one parent to dictate what is best for all students. As a parent, it is MY responsibility to monitor what MY child does and help her make the best decisions for herself. What works for, is appropriate for, or can be tolerated or understood by my own child is not necessary in perfect alignment with students sitting in the same classroom as her. One of the incredible things about free choice is that is provides students (and all people, truly) with the ability to learn for themselves and decide what does and does not have a place in their lives. I trust my child's teachers and librarians to create safe, caring, supportive environments for my child. This is a stain on the history of Rockingham County Public Schools, and the School Board and Superintendent should be deeply ashamed of the way the are publicly advocating for the destruction of human rights and progress by endorsing censorship and close-mindedness.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>*</p> | <p>This policy does not describe consequences for teachers/librarians/etc who do not bring materials that contain the prohibited content to the school board for review/or intentionally ignore materials that are in violation of these policies If students have consequences for breaking school policies (JFCF) then teachers/etc need to have consequences as well</p> | <p>*</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>1. I am confused as to why the word non-instructional was added. It appears it was done so that library books and books in classroom collections could be addressed. Where then is there a policy addressing instructional supplementary materials? There is a policy for textbooks, but videos, workbooks, maps, etc. are not textbooks but could indeed be used with an entire class of students as instructional material. 2. This policy states that supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content are prohibited. If the intent is this policy only applies to non-instructional material, then you have achieved what you have desired. You will take every book out of the library that is meant for independent student reading. What then do you do with the books that are used for instruction? IIA addresses instructional materials and outlines the procedures around using instructional materials containing sexually explicit material. If IIAB applies to any supplementary material (instructional and non-instructional), then our students will be robbed of the opportunity to study classic literature because there is sexually explicit material in many classics. If IIAB is only meant to apply to non-instructional material then again, how are instructional supplementary materials to be handled? At best, this policy is vague and confusing.</p> | <p>1. For bullet five various points of view imply more than one. Please use diverse points of view to imply our students will have an opportunity to be exposed to points of view they may not hold themselves so they can better navigate the diverse world they will encounter as adults. 2..This policy still leaves me with a lot of questions. First, what exactly is the Massanutten Regional Library age classification that teachers and librarians are to reference as part of the selection criteria? Does this refer to where MRL has placed a book in the collection (Young Adult, Juvenile, Easy, etc.)? A local librarian made that decision based on the education they have completed in library sciences. That would be a similar education our school librarians have completed in library sciences. The local librarian should be consulted by the school librarian as to whether a book should go in the school collection? Furthermore, a book may be in the adult section at MRL and yet be perfectly suitable for a school library. This is especially true in the area of nonfiction. If the age classification refers to something else, I would want to know what. I can't imagine the librarians at MRL have secret access to resources our school librarians do not have access to. Second, is the principal or designee expected to review the list of books submitted by the librarian that have been selected and acquired or are they simply making sure it is available to the parents? If we are expecting principals to review every book that is purchased, then I wonder what the school principal is not having an opportunity to accomplish. I'm not sure that this school board has a true grasp on the number of books that are added to a school library collection. Third, will the books that were selected and acquired be on the shelves during the 30-day parent review window, or will they be sitting in the library office? Do librarians have the option of placing books on the list prior to the actual acquisition so that students will have access to newly released books? I know a lot of disappointed students who were not able to read some books in a series that were released while the halt on the purchase of library materials was ongoing in RCPS. Fourth, in the section that lists the selection of materials to enrich student learning you may have been too specific. If teachers and librarians are to select materials in order to enrich student learning in all of these ways, they will be hard-pressed to find supplementary materials that are not books to support leisure reading among students or support a reading program. This policy is written for supplementary materials (which are stated as instructional in the second sentence), but it addresses books. Perhaps some of these could be combined with an "or" so that the policy does not pigeonhole teachers and librarians from selecting any materials that are not books and/or meant for independent reading.</p> | <p>Once again, I have a lot of questions. I believe these questions need to have definitive answers before any policy should be enacted. First and foremost, how will the Content Review Committee be selected by the superintendent? What will be the criteria for being appointed? How can it be ensured that the CRC will have diverse representation (socio-economic, geographical, race, religion, age, gender, political persuasion, etc.)? Second, I am a parent and certainly want parents to have a voice in their children's education, but I do not view the school system or its employees as enemies trying to undermine my parental authority. Educators have had specialized training to do what they do. Why then, are we giving a greater voice to parents over professionals? Let the committee be a school librarian, a teacher, the supervisor of media services, a member of the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee, and two (2) parents, guardians, or community members. An assistant superintendent can sit on the committee to have input only in the case of a 50/50 split on a decision. Third, will the school board take the recommendation of the CRC or will they do what they want since they make the final decision? How will there be accountability? Will the community be informed of CRC recommendations and school board decisions?</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>1. I'm extremely disappointed by the efforts of the school board to hide this process from public comment and put our school system in a position of potential legal liability, further loss of funding, and wasting tax payer resources on an effort and behavior that has been specifically called out by the governor and state government as unnecessary. This done while also pointing to the same state guidance on definitions and cherry picking portions as outlined in my 2nd point.</p> <p>""Current law unequivocally affirms that the adoption of these model policies by a school board should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools. Therefore, the bill is unnecessary."</p> <p>* https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Vetoes-(1).pdf</p> <p>2. From reviewing the cited Va Code §2.2-2827. This seems to be the definition of sexually explicit content used for policing what government workers can view on their work machines while employed by the state and performing their duties which is not a stance on literature. It is certainly not the specific section for juveniles which follows VA Code (§ 18.2-390) which is specifically around what is being discussed.</p> <p>6) "Harmful to juveniles" means that quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse, when it (a) predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of juveniles, (b) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles, and (c) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for juveniles.</p> <p>This portion shows what the state is saying in that specific point is that it is aligning to the federal statues of obscenity as upheld by the US Supreme Court countless times. Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15 (1973) and specifically the **Miller Test</p> <p>** https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miller_test</p> <p>The supremacy clause is clear that local government in particular can not reinterpret and bypass the federal definition as upheld by the Supreme court. This was showcased in a similar example in In Cooper v. Aaron, 358 U.S. 1 (1958), the Supreme Court rejected attempts by Arkansas to nullify the Court's school desegregation decision, Brown v. Board of Education. The state of Arkansas, acting on a theory of states' rights, had adopted several statutes designed to nullify the desegregation ruling. The Supreme Court relied on the Supremacy Clause to hold that the federal law controlled and could not be nullified by state statutes or officials.</p> | <p>Please see previous section of this document as this portion IIABS just further outlines the same issues as above.</p> | <p>I would suggest seeking clarification via your legal counsel of the definitions and processes around the Miller test and definitions of obscenity</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>1. Paragraph 1, line 2: I don't want to get into too much word smithing but I find the definitions of instructional materials in policy IIA and supplemental materials in IIAB, and specifically the difference between them, to be worded unclearly. Maybe that's just because I'm a parent who doesn't understand the lingo and context.</p> <p>2. Paragraph 2, line 5: I see the advantage in using a legal basis for defining what is not appropriate. But it doesn't look to me like VA Code 2.2-2827 is the best fit in this context. That code was written to define what content isn't appropriate for state employees to look at on their government-issued devices. That is a far cry from a standard on evaluating literature. VA Code 18.2-390 is an example of a much more relevant regulation. It is written to define what isn't appropriate to sell or loan to juveniles. It is regulating a subject matter somewhat closer to literature and rightly includes context as part of the evaluation. It includes some of the same language as 2.2-2827 but without some of the odd specificity.</p> <p>Another legal precedent with relevant language is in the Supreme Court case Miller vs. California, which seeks to define obscenity and, again contains language on context as part of the evaluation.</p> <p>Whatever definition you use, language that includes context ("work as a whole," etc.) as part of the evaluative process is critical. The written word is a visual representation of the sounds humans make by flapping their lips and tongue around. The flapping is unimportant, it is the meaning of the flapping that is important. The individual written word is less meaningful (full of meaning) than the collection of words that is a sentence. And a sentence less so than a book, etc. If the context of the work as a whole is ignored, then the book is not being evaluated. Words are. If the intention of these policies is to evaluate words, then you can say so and the policies can be written more simply and concisely than they currently are.</p> | <p>1. Paragraph 2, line 3: What is the intent of "materials do not exist to provide universal coverage"? Does it mean that a school library is not tasked to collect books on every conceivable subject and point of view? Does that need to be said? Could this phrase be used as a cover for excluding a subject or point of view that part of our community actually wants in a library. If so, I'd suggest removing or rewording.</p> <p>2. Paragraph 3, bullet points. This list is very similar to the policy adopted in Hanover County. However, one point in the Hanover policy that was omitted is "Any acquisition should be considered for inclusion in the collection based on its overall merit as a complete work." Such language is, I believe, extremely important to include in our policy.</p> <p>3. I don't think the Hanover policy is an ideal example, but since it was a policy you consulted, I'll add that it includes an avenue for teachers and librarians to request permission to use material that might be considered sexually explicit in order to meet particular pedagogical goals (again, context). That kind of flexibility sounds reasonable to me.</p> <p>4. Paragraph 5: This paragraph and the ideas it contains must be written very carefully, and with deference to teacher and librarian input, such that the result is not a regime that fosters stress and toxicity among those professionals and the school as a whole. For example, the way it reads, a teacher could go into the school library (librarian's purview) and remove books to submit for review. If that is not the intent, more careful wording is needed. In addition, it is odd that the teacher/librarian is to submit the material to the CRC rather than the principal. Elsewhere in the policies, the principal is part of the process. Submitting directly to the CRC seems to break the normal chain of command and undercut the principal's position. Again, I'd have to say the Hanover policy is more carefully worded under Deselection of Materials.</p> <p>5. Paragraph 6, line 1: The teacher and librarian is to submit the list "regularly" after both selecting and acquiring. But it must be available to parents 30 days from selection? Maybe a teacher or librarian would not be confused about the timeline indicated by the words "regular," "selected," and "acquired." But I am.</p> | <p>1. Paragraph 2, line 5: It should be outlined what the word "review" means; what constitutes the expected review. In the Hanover policy, under Level One of the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials (Controversial) there is an example of such an outline. I think identifying what is expected in a review is important for whatever is being reviewed for whatever the reason. And again, I will highlight the 5th point in Hanover's outline: "value as a whole and not in part."</p> <p>2. Paragraph 3, 1.: I'm not sure what is intended that the principal "should" assist the complainant. I'm trying to picture the complainant thoughtfully filling out the form, referring to the book or other material for specifics on the location of the concerning content while sitting in the office with the principal helping out. Instead of "should," how about "may upon request" assist. In the event the complainant needs some help or something.</p> <p>3. Paragraph 3, 1.: Does "submit... the challenged supplemental material" mean the material is removed from the school during the review process? A book isn't a person, but I'm partial to the innocent until proven guilty concept.</p> <p>4. Paragraph 3, 1.: I think there should be a review at the school level, the level of the primary relationship between parent and school. See point 10 below. If sexually explicit content is of special concern, a decision to remove a book at the school level could still be reported up the chain to implement in all schools if that is the policy's aim.</p> <p>5. Paragraph 3, 3.: There does need to be a final arbiter. At first I was uncomfortable with it being the School Board, mainly due to concerns about the politicization of this process. But after some thought and discussions, I understand why the Board is appropriate as the final arbiter. But more language should be added to clarify its role. First, it should be outlined how the board reviews the material. See point #1 above. Second, it should indicate how, when and where the decision is made. By majority vote at the next regular Board meeting? Whatever it is, it should be made clear for transparency, accountability, and consistency as board members change. In addition, I'm uncomfortable with how the process zips straight through a few steps from the complaint to the final arbiter with no chance of resolution before the final arbiter or indication that previous steps are relevant to the Board's final decision.</p> <p>6. Paragraph 4, line 5: I don't think "partisan or doctrinal disapproval" is strong or clear enough language to describe what is outside the bounds of consideration as a complaint. People very regularly disagree about what is partisan or doctrinal. People very regularly deny they are doing something for partisan or doctrinal (read political or religious) reasons. The main point is that a complaint about material should not be considered if it is a complaint about an idea. "Idea" is the key word. In addition, is excluding the idea category the only thing</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>1.) Include the requirement that any complaint about school material be consumed in its entirety (e.g. read or viewed, or listened to) by any person making the complaint and a rationale provided. 2. Include the requirement that committee members responding to a complaint about school material consume in its entirety (e.g. read or viewed, or listened to) and provide a rationale for its decision. 3.) No lists or verbal complaints will be considered. 4.) Decisions made based on sexually explicit material, by Virginia law, cannot be the sole basis for banning a book. Use the Miller Test as a guide: "A book may be considered obscene if it, on the whole, (1) appeals to prurient interest, (2) is patently offensive, and (3) lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. All three criteria must be true to meet this definition of obscenity." 5.) If the complainant agrees with the committee, then the school board should not be involved. 6. The draft has no limitation on how many complaints an individual can make. Note: The list of banned books do not follow this draft and must be reinstated immediately.</p> | <p>1.) Include the requirement that any complaint about school material be consumed in its entirety (e.g. read or viewed, or listened to) by any person making the complaint and a rationale provided. 2. Include the requirement that committee members responding to a complaint about school material consume in its entirety (e.g. read or viewed, or listened to) and provide a rationale for its decision. 3.) No lists or verbal complaints will be considered. 4.) Decisions made based on sexually explicit material, by Virginia law, cannot be the sole basis for banning a book. Use the Miller Test as a guide: "A book may be considered obscene if it, on the whole, (1) appeals to prurient interest, (2) is patently offensive, and (3) lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. All three criteria must be true to meet this definition of obscenity." 5.) If the complainant agrees with the committee, then the school board should not be involved. 6. The draft has no limitation on how many complaints an individual can make. Note: The list of banned books do not follow this draft and must be reinstated immediately.</p> | <p>1.) Include the requirement that any complaint about school material be consumed in its entirety (e.g. read or viewed, or listened to) by any person making the complaint and a rationale provided. 2. Include the requirement that committee members responding to a complaint about school material consume in its entirety (e.g. read or viewed, or listened to) and provide a rationale for its decision. 3.) No lists or verbal complaints will be considered. 4.) Decisions made based on sexually explicit material, by Virginia law, cannot be the sole basis for banning a book. Use the Miller Test as a guide: "A book may be considered obscene if it, on the whole, (1) appeals to prurient interest, (2) is patently offensive, and (3) lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. All three criteria must be true to meet this definition of obscenity." 5.) If the complainant agrees with the committee, then the school board should not be involved. 6. The draft has no limitation on how many complaints an individual can make. Note: The list of banned books do not follow this draft and must be reinstated immediately.</p> |
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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>A blanket ban on sexually explicit material cuts out numerous books that are worth students being able to pick up and read. Why do I teach fiction? One reason is to build empathy. Another is to provide students the opportunity for imaginative rehearsal-- to consider what they would do if they found themselves in a novel situation. Multiple books tell the stories of sexual assault survivors. Is it harmful for our high school students to be aware that sexual assault occurs and to empathize with others, some of whom are their peers? Is it bad for them to be exposed to texts that might help them consider how they may keep themselves safe from assault? Keeping books off shelves won't keep our students from unsafe situations. It also won't lessen the likelihood that they will become sexually active. It will only leave them in the dark. But if they are exposed to quality fiction that contains sexual content, it might help them grapple with making choices that will help to keep them safe and to have agency over their bodies and their well-being. This is not an endorsement of all sexually explicit material, but the most powerful texts we read are typically the ones that challenge us and push us to grapple with discomforting material.</p> | <p>Omitting material that contains sexually explicit material is likely to address perspectives of those who are sexual assault survivors, which would fail to achieve the stated aim of providing "a balanced collection reflecting various points of view."</p> | <p>One teacher on a committee to determine whether or not material is appropriate for the classroom? That seems low compared to three parents. I come to my doctor with my opinions and questions, but I generally listen to my doctor's recommendations and my doctor listens to and responds to my questions and concerns. I have a similar relationship with my students and their families. I am happy to have conversations with parents about what I am teaching their children. I love talking about books; it's why I'm an English teacher.</p> <p>How are you going to determine what teachers and parents are on this committee? Are we having teachers who use the text or someone who isn't invested in the text? Are you going to throw a first year teacher into an intimidating situation if they have the material in question and leave them without a seasoned teacher to guide them? That seems inappropriate. Are you going to put parents on a committee who are coming in with their minds made up, or are they coming to have a conversation and express concerns? Do their opinions need to align with board members to be selected? This has the potential to be a decent policy if more teacher voices are included, and if it is operated in good faith. It also has the potential to be a terrible policy if operated in bad faith. To this point the rhetoric of many board members does not inspire a belief in their good faith. I hope they will prove that concern wrong.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>A main concern I have for the policy itself is how are we going to differentiate between sexual content being for 'pleasure' vs. actually contributing to the story line? There are books where sexual conduct is essential to the plot or the characters growth. When discussing hard topics such as sexual assault, rape, or other forms of even human trafficking, these topics are often discussed in specific book titles.</p> <p>We live in a typically safe community, but that doesn't mean we don't have students who have witnessed these atrocities, or even been part of it themselves. It's important that we have content where we can discuss these issues with our students. Just recently we read "Night" by Elie Wiesel in my English 10 Advanced class. Elie recalls that he witnessed young boys essentially being treated better than other prisoners...due to them being young boys and the Nazi's taking an 'interest' in them. This led us to conversations about human trafficking and what it can look like.</p> <p>I do understand the difference between sexual content in books for individual 'pleasure' or rather known as 'smut' books, but a vast majority of the books that were removed don't fall under that criteria. The Virginia code doesn't necessarily make it clear, so I would like the policy to be transparent when discussing what qualifies as sexually inappropriate.</p> | <p>N/A</p> | <p>How are the individuals on the committee going to be picked? I would like to know the criteria how the Superintendent will pick these individuals. Will there be a diverse selection of opinion/beliefs? While more central myself, it's only fair we have a wide variety of voices heard on this community.</p> <p>Also, I would like to see more teachers/librarians on the committee than community members. We are the ones that have college degrees in our individual fields, as well as history with students and what content looks like in our rooms. Trust us to make the right decision. I'm fine with community members being on the committee, but I'd like to see more teachers or librarians than just community members.</p> <p>I don't agree with the school board having the final say after the committee meets. I realize the committee will be bringing their opinion to the superintendent, then he would take it to the board, but if we're already going through the lengthy process of analyzing a specific media choice, why both if the school board has the final say? They haven't read the book, while the committee has. Personally, I would feel like my opinion or my expertise doesn't matter in the long run.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>A supplemental material should not only be defined as non-instructional items (second sentence, paragraph one). You could theoretically have a supplemental material that does have an instructional purpose.</p> | <p>I have four questions. 1) How will the list of supplemental materials be communicated to parents? 2) Which set of parents will receive the communication of new supplemental materials--the parents within the school that the new materials are located, or all parents? 3) What happens to the supplemental materials during the thirty day review period? Are they allowed to be put into circulation or use, or must they be placed on hold? 4) If reviews from standard professional selection sources are an approved criterion for selection (11th bullet in the subsection Criteria for selection), then why the extra step for a parental review?</p> <p>My concern with these questions is feasibility on multiple levels.</p> <p>1)Who will manage the communication of all of the lists? That takes time and resources away from instruction.</p> <p>2) If a teacher comes up with an idea for a lesson needing a supplemental material, but needs thirty days before they can utilize it, the amazing creative lesson using the supplemental material will just not take place. Some of the best lessons emerge in spontaneity, tailor-made to the current student make-up of one's classroom. Because the needs of the students are always changing, one cannot predict what supplemental material for a lesson will work thirty-days in advance. I am concerned your time-constraint actually will inhibit great learning and creative lesson planning, especially on the elementary level. How many times will a teacher go into a place like Target of the Green Valley Book Fair, see a great new book and think how they can use it to teach a concept to their classroom? Our children might suffer as a result of this unintended consequence.</p> <p>3) Is the thirty-day review period for parents truly necessary if one of the criteria are the professional reviews? Why spend time, energy, and resources in reinventing the wheel? If the concern of the policy is sexually explicit content, maybe focus energy specifically on that component? In other words, require teachers and librarians to only report any book that might have some component that tangentially might have sexual content that could be challenged. Then, when the list is shared, links to the reviews should be included.</p> <p>These suggestions could save much time and prevent much angst. By relying on the professional judgment (as referenced in IIAB) and the professional reviews, you can empower your employees to be professional and still address the books that contain sexually explicit content, which is the crux of your concern.</p> | <p>I have three concerns with IIABB.</p> <p>1) I am concerned that the sexually explicit content review committee is imbalanced. The design has three licensed professionals and four parents. The unintended message you are sending to your licensed, professional employees is that you do not trust them. I do not think that is the message you want to send. I agree with bringing parents into the equation, but you still should affirm you trust your employees. I personally know many employees in your school division. They love teaching and making a difference in your student's lives. But many of them also live paycheck to paycheck and would not dare do anything to jeopardize their job. Trust that they will do their job well!</p> <p>I am a pastor in the area. Hypothetically, say every sermon had to be reviewed by several members of my congregation who do not have any theological training whatsoever before I could preach that sermon to ensure I did not have anything that hurt their feelings in the sermon. How long would it be before I left the congregation? The church hired me to preach the Bible and trust that I am putting my training from Valley Forge, Regent, and Liberty to good use. If I needed review from untrained individuals, the message received instead would be one of distrust.</p> <p>The same should be in how you craft this policy. Trust that your teachers, librarians, and administrators are all advocating for the welfare of the children across the division. If you put this policy in place as written, you will inadvertently devalue your employees and communicate that you do not trust them, just like in my hypothetical scenario. If you want parents to be involved, please keep them involved! My suggestion is to shrink the ratio: keep the three licensed professionals and two parents in total for a total committee of five. Parents still would have a voice (40%), but you will also communicate you trust your staff!</p> <p>2) I do not agree you only have one CRC committee for the whole division for an entire year. Rather, it should be based on region or have a pool of parents, teachers, and librarians to pull from. Likewise, you should have three teams based upon grade level: an elementary librarian with elementary parents for elementary challenges, a middle school librarian with middle school parents for middle school challenges, etc. This would help reduce bias. This prevents the appearance of a few parents hand-picked to make a decision about a book. But if there is a pool that rotates, then you are bringing several different voices to the conversation and gives more integrity to the process. Having a pool also removes conflicts of interest, such as if a challenge is brought from the school the librarian on the committee serves, or from a challenge from a parent who is a neighbor of a parent on the committee, etc. You want to avoid that conflict of interest and the appearance the process already has a predetermined outcome to be as fair as possible. The only way you can really ensure that bias is removed is to make sure that no person involved</p> |

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| Rockingham County Resident | acceptable | "Creating a caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity within our community and beyond;" What is your definition of "diversity"? How does this relate to DEI, Critical Race Theory? | "or certain materials may otherwise contain sexually explicit content." - how can it contain explicit content if that is against VA law (Virginia Code §2.2-2827 and School Board Policy IIA)? There shouldn't be ANY explicit sexual content. PERIOD. Ninety day period to respond is unreasonable - 2 weeks is sufficient. |
| Teacher | After reading VA code 2.2-2827, I'm concerned that the definition of sexually explicit is too broad. I teach first grade and cannot imagine such content would show up in my classroom, but I would expect that teachers in high school should have more flexibility in choosing content for their students. If I'm reading the code correctly any "sexual conduct" in reading materials would not be permitted. This seems like a stretch. | I've been teaching for 19 years, all in first grade. My classroom library is quite extensive. I have over 1,000 books on my shelves. I'm the teacher that many of my peers borrow books from. Although my students don't have free access to my collection, I feel like this policy will add a lot of extra work to my workload and to that of my principal. Teachers at the elementary level already have less planning time than their peers and this would add more to our already overly full plates. For example, because our county doesn't provide books for social studies for our elementary students, I have bought many for my classroom with my own money. If one of my books depicts an indigenous American in a loin cloth, is this a book I'm going to have to pull from my collection because some might consider this to be defined as nudity as defined in 18.2-390? Will books like No, David by David Shannon be considered lewd because it has a drawing of David running down the street naked? First graders use Epic Books on their iPads for extra reading materials. Who is going to be in charge of policing Epic? | Will teachers who serve on a committee that reviews books that have been questioned be paid for their time? |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Agree | Agree | Agree |
| Rockingham County Resident | Agree | Agree | Who is teaching in the classroom? The teacher or the students? It doesn't seem like the teachers have any rights. But they could be overruled by a student??? And disciplined Because of students opinions??!! |
| Rockingham County Resident | Agree | Agree | Agree |
| Rockingham County Resident | Agree materials with explicit content should be prohibited. | Parents should continue to be made aware of materials being used in the classroom. | More than likely will be complaints so good to see policy on how to handle being set up along with including who will be on the committee. |
| Parent/Guardian | Agree strongly with these changes. Wish you could use as a criteria, "The material is fine to add to the collection if it is something you wouldn't be embarrassed to read to your grandmother." | I am agreed with the guidelines set forth in this policy. | Sad that this form is necessary. It seems overly thorough. |
| Parent/Guardian | Agree with the revisions. | Agree with the drafted content. | Agree with this document. |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>All books are supplementary materials if they help students with reading skills.</p> | <p>Why is "sexually explicit" the only basis for complaining about supplementary materials?</p> | <p>The best way for parents to promote their values is to have open discussion with their child about the media they use both in and outside of the school environment. Parents have the choice to create family rules about media if they choose to do so. However, these policies create opportunity for parents to impose their values on other students and families. This complaint procedure use a lot of time and resources that administrators, librarians and teachers could use for instruction and planning.</p> <p>I also think it is important that anyone making decisions about removing materials be required to read and review the works in their entirety, not based solely on excerpts.</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Although I am a retired/former teacher and my children no longer attend RCPS, I continue to be concerned in what the children of our community are exposed and subjected to.</p> <p>The purpose of "Education" has always been to prepare children to be productive citizens; to be able to read, write, do math, know history, understand the sciences, and to function in our society.</p> <p>Sexually explicit material has no place in "Education" and should never have even entered our school curricula. This is particularly inappropriate in K through 8, and especially when addressing deviation from healthy biologically normal instruction.</p> <p>If these parents who advocate these "lifestyle choices" want this for their children ~ that is (unfortunately for their children) their choice ~ but the vast majority of parents want their young children to be Educated ~ not Indoctrinated!</p> <p>When this started being introduced in schools, I found myself having to explain to one of my underage children what Bestiality is, and why the boys in one scene discuss "F#€King Cows" ... there are disturbing scenes of violence, gang rape, infanticide, exorcism, murder, etc. in the book Beloved. When my child returned the book to the teacher and said she found it distressing, she smirked at her and replied, "I thought you were mature enough to handle the content. I guess I was wrong". No! The "teacher" was wrong!</p> <p>The draft policy is needed to protect our children from sexual predation; inappropriate graphic content; and to support parents who want to protect their children from materials that have nothing to do with education.</p> <p>Let's focus on Educating our children by producing materials to prepare them for their future. Pornographic materials, Violence and Graphic deviant content does not further Education and Wastes Taxpayer Dollars that should be used to help children further their Academic Instruction.</p> | <p>I agree that materials should be carefully scrutinized and parents should have the right reject any inappropriate content.</p> | <p>If it is challenged due to graphic, sexually explicit, pornographic content and violence, it should be banned.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>Approve</p> | <p>Approve</p> | <p>Approve</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>approve updates</p> | <p>not in favor, if we trust our staff and faculty enough to be hired, we should trust their professional judgement of what is age and level appropriate</p> | <p>disagree</p> |
| <p>Staff member, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Are supplementary materials any item in a classroom which is not furnished by the county? Do you really still need to list film strips?</p> | <p>“Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials”- This will totally eliminate any creativity that many teachers use to help gain the interest of their students so that some of the more difficult to reach students will be able to learn and understand. Or to expand their lesson to challenge those students who are a level above other students. If every teacher submitted every item that they use in a classroom for review, you would have to hire a significant number of employees just to handle organizing and submitting these things in a manner that Parents can review them! What is the philosophy of “Empowering ALL Learners”? I do not have time to look through all of your listed codes, court cases, cross references, etc., but I do not feel that every book that has a reference to any form of sexual content or bad language should be banned. Depending on the content of the book, small portions of what might be considered offensive material is needed for factual information of historical events, current events, and fictitious stories. Some of the books can be very helpful to students who may be involve in certain situations to help them know they are not alone, that everything is not their fault, and they can hopefully live with or overcome whatever is going on in their lives. If parents want their children to be totally sheltered from things like this until they are thrown into the world on their own, then they can notify the school librarians so those students will not be able to access those books. (I just hope those students do not have a smartphone, or who knows what they might see and read!) Not all parents keep their children in a bubble for 18 years and those parents/students have rights as well. “Content Review Committee”- Who is on the content review committee? Will they actually read whole books or just “research” phrases and take words out of context?</p> | <p>Any complaint about materials containing sexually explicit content, should not even be heard unless the person complaining has read the complete book and did not just pick and choose passages from the book. Again, if a parent does not want their child to have access to a certain book, they can have that set up at the school library. ---- Who is on the content review committee? Will they actually read whole books or just “research” phrases and take words out of context?</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Are textbooks even used? When I asked for a textbook in order to help my son who is in 7th grade with Math work I was told there was not a textbook everything was on the chromebook. How about having students read from a text book like I had to in the 90's. Seems that kids would get more out of it than reading from a computer.</p> | <p>As a parent I do not feel that children should have access to books with sexual content, transgender stories, or stories that involve same sex relationships. Children cannot read or discuss the Bible while in school nor is the Bible in the library so these materials shouldn't be either. I grew up in Broadway had Mr Harrell as a history teacher one of the best ever. I can assure you my kids have been taught nothing or very little about the Civil War, Holocaust, or Vietnam War. But teachers and schools want to push same sex marriage, let me be a cat, and let me change my sex.</p> | <p>As a parent I feel complaints should follow a chain of command but when nothing has been done then the school board should step in. That's why they are elected to speak for the parents. Im glad that they are speaking up for the parents. About time someone stand up for the parents that do not agree with how Rockingham County Schools are handling sexual material in schools!</p> |

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| <p>Librarian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Are you asking teachers (classroom, reading, SPED, PE, music, art, and so on) and librarians to submit all items listed as supplemental to the principal or designee? Would this include not only books, but maps (charts), games (chess, checkers, Rush Hour, and so on), phonics materials and games created by the teacher not included in the basal series, classroom magazines such as National Geographic Kids, works of art, supplementary skill workbooks for struggling learners, PE/recess equipment, hands on materials such as plants, rocks, and food items, guest speakers and the materials they use, or any resource the teacher may have located on the internet to use in supplementing his or her lesson? I would suggest that the definition of supplemental materials be better defined or narrowed down. In creating an environment of richness of diversity in our community, supplemental materials play an integral role in students' education. Our community is becoming more diverse every day and this diversity needs to be represented in supplemental materials. As students grow and mature, they need materials that will challenge their views and help them define and deduce what their values are in conjunction to what they have been taught by their parents.</p> | <p>Absolutely! Established policies for parents to use when questioning or limiting materials their child is exposed to are important. That is why we have had a materials challenge form and in the libraries we have procedures to use when parents want to limit the choice in materials their child checks out. These allow the librarian to place a warning in the system to alert the librarian or designee about the subjects in books they knowingly contain such matter and sending a notice to the parents of any materials their child checks out of the library. This policy has been in place previously.</p> | <p>It seems with this statement that the school board is taking the final decision of this matter out of the hands of the parent/complainant. The complainant should have the opportunity to hear and be involved in the process, and then decide for themselves if they are satisfied with the committee's recommendation based on their initial complaint. The complainant should be respected as an intelligent citizen who can disseminate the information presented by the committee for their own understanding. If they are not satisfied, then it can be submitted to the school board for final review. This could also go the other way. Perhaps the committee/superintendent recommends the material be pulled, and the complainant is in agreeance with this decision, but the school board reviews it and decides it should stay. This might not seem plausible with the current school board but if members of the school board would change, it could be a reality.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>As a lifelong native of Rockingham County and a former RCPS student, former parent of a RCPS student, and now grandparent of a RCPS student, I write to voice my opposition to these proposed policies. While I respect the conservative beliefs of our county and hold many of those same beliefs myself, I have chosen to step outside the walls of partisan agendas and instead put the best interests of the children of Rockingham County first. I do not believe in, nor do I support, a system that would allow the school board to ultimately ban materials from our schools. I deeply believe that parents, not government bodies, should dictate how one raises their children. That is the very point of my opposition to this proposed policy. The parents and guardians of each student in Rockingham County should be left to decide what is best for his or her child. A system that allows parents to express concerns to teachers and librarians about the materials available to their specific children and create a plan for how to handle that specifically to their children, much like what is utilized now, is how these matters should be handled. Yes, allow the parents to voice their concerns, but only for their children, not the children of all residents of the county. This proposed policy is a gross overstep of power on the part of the school board. I ask that you reconsider your position and not adopt this proposed policy.</p> | <p>As a lifelong native of Rockingham County and a former RCPS student, former parent of a RCPS student, and now grandparent of a RCPS student, I write to voice my opposition to these proposed policies. While I respect the conservative beliefs of our county and hold many of those same beliefs myself, I have chosen to step outside the walls of partisan agendas and instead put the best interests of the children of Rockingham County first. I do not believe in, nor do I support, a system that would allow the school board to ultimately ban materials from our schools. I deeply believe that parents, not government bodies, should dictate how one raises their children. That is the very point of my opposition to this proposed policy. The parents and guardians of each student in Rockingham County should be left to decide what is best for his or her child. A system that allows parents to express concerns to teachers and librarians about the materials available to their specific children and create a plan for how to handle that specifically to their children, much like what is utilized now, is how these matters should be handled. Yes, allow the parents to voice their concerns, but only for their children, not the children of all residents of the county. This proposed policy is a gross overstep of power on the part of the school board. I ask that you reconsider your position and not adopt this proposed policy.</p> | <p>As a lifelong native of Rockingham County and a former RCPS student, former parent of a RCPS student, and now grandparent of a RCPS student, I write to voice my opposition to these proposed policies. While I respect the conservative beliefs of our county and hold many of those same beliefs myself, I have chosen to step outside the walls of partisan agendas and instead put the best interests of the children of Rockingham County first. I do not believe in, nor do I support, a system that would allow the school board to ultimately ban materials from our schools. I deeply believe that parents, not government bodies, should dictate how one raises their children. That is the very point of my opposition to this proposed policy. The parents and guardians of each student in Rockingham County should be left to decide what is best for his or her child. A system that allows parents to express concerns to teachers and librarians about the materials available to their specific children and create a plan for how to handle that specifically to their children, much like what is utilized now, is how these matters should be handled. Yes, allow the parents to voice their concerns, but only for their children, not the children of all residents of the county. This proposed policy is a gross overstep of power on the part of the school board. I ask that you reconsider your position and not adopt this proposed policy.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>As a Reading Specialist, I use a lot of teacher-constructed visuals, anchor charts, and decodable books with my First-Third Grade students. Do these revisions mean that each of these items would need to be submitted for approval to my Principal or designee before I would be able to utilize them in my instructional program?</p> | <p>See first question</p> | <p>See first question</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>As a resident of Rockingham County, a former student of RCPS, a former parent to a student of RCPS, and a current grandparent of a child in RCPS, I submit this response in opposition to the proposed policies. It has been my experience as parent and a church youth group leader that allowing students to explore difficult subjects and learn about things that they would otherwise not encounter in their current day-to-day lives in a safe and structured environment, such as through their school, is not only beneficial but necessary. Students need an ability to learn and explore and not feel judgment or shame for doing so. Students should also feel that they can talk to an adult about any subject. They should not be made to feel that their interests are wrong or bad. Additionally, no matter what path a student plans to take after graduation, he or she can benefit from learning about and exploring a wide array of subjects. This will help them to be open to not only their community but cultures and communities that are different from their own. We need to be preparing students to show compassion and understanding, not just for those who are like them, but for those who are different from them or share different beliefs than them. Pumping them full of polarizing political agendas will only further divide our communities for generations to come. Further, I deeply believe that the teachers and parents, working one-on-one to address a specific parent's specific concerns for the education of his or her own children, is the best approach to take. We, as a community, and you, as the school board and school system, should trust parents and teachers to be able to do so. Instead of adopting policies that further divide our community and will teach our children to close themselves off to anything that is new or different, I implore you to rethink this course of action. If the best interests of the children and community are truly your goal, take a step back and listen to all community members before adopting policies to the detriment of the very individuals you serve.</p> | <p>As a resident of Rockingham County, a former student of RCPS, a former parent to a student of RCPS, and a current grandparent of a child in RCPS, I submit this response in opposition to the proposed policies. It has been my experience as parent and a church youth group leader that allowing students to explore difficult subjects and learn about things that they would otherwise not encounter in their current day-to-day lives in a safe and structured environment, such as through their school, is not only beneficial but necessary. Students need an ability to learn and explore and not feel judgment or shame for doing so. Students should also feel that they can talk to an adult about any subject. They should not be made to feel that their interests are wrong or bad. 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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>As written, with a flat-out prohibition on "sexually explicit content" (very broadly defined in VA § 2.2-2827 & § 18.2-390), I think this policy is over-reaching. It does not allow the ability to take the context of the particular material into account. It is too blanket a restriction.</p> <p>Our adolescents are going through lots of experiences, including sexual ones, and I believe that allowing them to have access to professionally vetted materials that include stories with some sexual content is more helpful than harmful. Reasonable parents can disagree; a procedure that allows for challenges and provides avenues to consider the pros & cons of a particular material (such as those that were already in place) is preferable to this policy.</p> | <p>I appreciate the list of goals for supplementary materials and the criteria for selection. I wish that these lists could make up the entirety of the policy - rather than needing to include the prohibition of sexually explicit content. It shifts the policy to seemingly being about how materials are selected, the acknowledgement of multiple considerations and factors and nuance in whether a particular material is added to the classroom or library - and then essentially just makes it about policing sexual content again.</p> <p>I also wonder about the reasonableness of the last part of the policy: "Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection." I really think that's a lot to ask of teachers and librarians unless there is a very easy and streamlined system that doesn't require them to do extra work. Our teachers and librarians already do so much, for so little pay, that I don't think any more burden should be put on them.</p> | <p>Since, as outlined above, I have a problem with creating a whole separate category for sexually explicit materials that doesn't take context into account, I don't like this two-track systems for complaints. However, assuming that is what is being implemented, I think more clarity and transparency of these reviews on the "sexually explicit" track is necessary. How is the school board making the final decision? At a public meeting or outside of its meeting? How will the decisions be shared and with whom?</p> <p>Also - why does the complainant challenging a non-sexually explicit materials get invited to a conference, but the complainant challenging a sexually explicit material does not? It seems like the complainant should be invited to the table in either case. I'm not sure why it would be treated differently. It is also strange to me that the process is 3 steps for sexually explicit materials complaint but 8 steps for the other materials.</p> <p>Overall I wish these policies were not being rewritten for the sole focus of restricting "sexually explicit" materials from our schools. We should be looking at the "whole" when crafting new policies that will address a broader goal than simply the restriction of certain stories. I wish the suggestions of the school librarians, who are professional educators, were given more weight.</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Banning books, particularly based on sexual content, raises concerns about censorship and the slippery slope of limiting access to information deemed controversial or uncomfortable by certain groups. It sets a precedent that could lead to further restrictions on artistic and literary expression. Other school districts in the state of Virginia have policies regarding "sexually explicit materials" that do not involve a ban.</p> | <p>This policy advocates for the reduction or elimination of classroom libraries, adding yet another demand to teachers' already burgeoning responsibilities. The ever-expanding list of tasks leaves educators with limited time and capacity to incorporate additional initiatives into their workflow.</p> | <p>Banning books, particularly based on sexual content, raises concerns about censorship and the slippery slope of limiting access to information deemed controversial or uncomfortable by certain groups. It sets a precedent that could lead to further restrictions on artistic and literary expression. Other school districts in the state of Virginia have policies regarding "sexually explicit materials" that do not involve a ban.</p> <p>In the absence of a designated feedback channel, I am taking the liberty to share my thoughts here: I am uncertain of the rationale behind soliciting feedback when it seems that decisions align with the board's preferences regardless of the broader sentiment within the community.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Being too picky. Teach them how to handle not take away books.</p> | <p>It's a book. Teach them how to handle. Life is everywhere. Our jobs to teach.</p> | <p>It's the lack of knowledge that changes things. Not the book.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Bien</p> | <p>Bien</p> | <p>Bien</p> |

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| <p>Staff member, Teacher, Librarian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>By instituting this policy and making libraries and classroom libraries supplementary materials, subject to the definition of "sexually explicit" as defined in the Code of Virginia 2.2-2827, this policy contradicts Governor Youngkin's recent veto of SB 235 because he indicated that the bill is "redundant," and "...policies by a school board should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools." Therefore, this policy is a contradiction to the law regarding sexually explicit instructional material and its intent.</p> | <p>Teachers and librarians are collaborative and trusted employees who strive to do what is right daily. By applying this to both classroom and school libraries, many teachers already have and will simply box up their classroom libraries for fear of violation of the policy. The National Council for Teachers of English wrote a position statement on classroom libraries. Some critical components of that statement include that classroom libraries are --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraged because teachers and educational professionals; recognize the importance of rich and diverse classroom libraries that offer students access to a wide and extensive repertoire of accessible reading materials; promote students' right to read while recognizing teachers as curriculum decision makers in promoting their students' repertoire of literacy skills and strategies; recognize that classroom libraries improve reading abilities for all students; increase literacy resources for teachers through access to diverse mentor texts and opportunities to differentiate literacy instruction; enlist other interested parties—administrators, support personnel, parents, and community leaders—to assist in the effort to financially support, build, and maintain diverse classroom libraries at all levels; <p>Statement on Classroom Libraries. (2021, August 25). National Council of Teachers of English. https://ncte.org/statement/classroom-libraries/</p> <p>Because this form requires a name and an email address, numerous teachers and librarians are fearful of the board's potential retribution. By providing feedback on the policy they feel threatened and worry that not only are their jobs in jeopardy, but they may damage family businesses and livelihoods by simply expressing their discontent and that those responses may be shared publicly. Whether intended or not, the board initiated this fear through the banning of books at its first meeting without conversation or collaboration with division employees.</p> <p>There is no clarity as to whether this policy eliminates the posting and use of instructional materials that may be deemed sexually explicit as indicated in the current policy, therefore decimating the materials that are used by advanced-level students in AP, Honors, or Dual Enrollment courses. As a teacher who has been in RCPS for 40 years and taught AP and Honors courses, those students are intelligent and thoughtful, capable of having mature discussions about literature taught in an introductory college literature course. The students may choose to conduct independent research and do further reading about the college-level literature taught in their AP Literature course. but they will no longer have those</p> | <p>The complaint form does not ask if the complainant has read the entire work. This would mean that a person could simply copy excerpts of materials from uncredible sources. A complainant should only represent a student or students, i.e. parents or guardians, because RCPS students are the audience of the books. If the purpose is to ensure that parents are playing an essential role, then parents who have students within RCPS are the ones who should have a voice.</p> |

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| Administrator | Classroom library books and school library books should not be included into the supplementary materials section due to these items being an option for students and not required read. These are often choice reading materials for students by their interests and not assigned as a requirement for a specific standard of learning. | The notification of recently selected supplementary materials adds additional work for classroom teachers and administration by having them submit a list of books or materials added to the classroom libraries. Based on my conversations with teachers they are considering not keeping a classroom library because of the additional steps required. They are often using their own money and are adding books throughout the year. Teachers are already overwhelmed with their many duties. | As a former middle school English teacher, librarian, and reading specialist it is so important to evaluate books as a whole and not simply searching for "bad" words or sexual acts. The books in our libraries (school or classroom) especially middle and high school should include the conflicts and topics that our students deal with or are part of our world. Books like Speak or Sold are powerful stories that give voice to those that have been abused or harmed. They are stories of resilience and triumph from adversity. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Complaining individual must read the entire material...also the review committee (and if it goes to the school board) the entire board read the entire material before decisions can be made. A full report on each review must be documented and made public. No lists or verbal complaints will be considered. The school board will not intervene on decisions made at the school or committee level...no veto power by the board. Use the Miller Test as a basis for review. Any one individual can only make one complaint per school year...or at some reasonable interval, I.e. cannot make multiple complaints. The current books temporarily removed must have proof of an individual complaint and as stated earlier be fully read by the individual before being put to the review committee etc. or be put back in service. | Complaining individual must read the entire material...also the review committee (and if it goes to the school board) the entire board read the entire material before decisions can be made. A full report on each review must be documented and made public. No lists or verbal complaints will be considered. The school board will not intervene on decisions made at the school or committee level...no veto power by the board. Use the Miller Test as a basis for review. Any one individual can only make one complaint per school year...or at some reasonable interval, I.e. cannot make multiple complaints. The current books temporarily removed must have proof of an individual complaint and as stated earlier be fully read by the individual before being put to the review committee etc. or be put back in service. | Complaining individual must read the entire material...also the review committee (and if it goes to the school board) the entire board read the entire material before decisions can be made. A full report on each review must be documented and made public. No lists or verbal complaints will be considered. The school board will not intervene on decisions made at the school or committee level...no veto power by the board. Use the Miller Test as a basis for review. Any one individual can only make one complaint per school year...or at some reasonable interval, I.e. cannot make multiple complaints. The current books temporarily removed must have proof of an individual complaint and as stated earlier be fully read by the individual before being put to the review committee etc. or be put back in service. |
| Rockingham County Resident | Concur | Concur | Concur |
| Rockingham County Resident | Confusing, unnecessary overreach. | Blatantly rude | Draft shows obvious unfamiliarity with being part of a school board. |

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| Teacher, Rockingham County Resident | <p>Did you take any of the suggestions that were made by the RCPS librarians into consideration?</p> <p>I think that any policy should require that books have cautionary labels and parents can choose whether their children should have access to such materials. If librarians and teachers have found that there is some value in a book for any student in their school then it needs to be included in the books that a child can access.</p> <p>I believe that the definition of sexually explicit that you are using has nothing to do with library materials and only what government employees are not allowed to access on their computers.</p> <p>VA Code § 18.2-390. deals specifically with what is illegal to sell or loan to juveniles</p> <p>6) "Harmful to juveniles" means that quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse, when it (a) predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of juveniles, (b) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles, and (c) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for juveniles.</p> | Any policy should encourage dialogue between parents, teachers and administrators about the materials that are used with students. The school system makes materials that are used for FLE available for parents to review and very few take advantage of that process. I want parents to be informed and involved and I don't think over-reaching policies put in place by the school board are going to encourage this. | There has been a policy in place to challenge books found in schools and only 3 parents took advantage of the process. Any sweeping policy is going to limit the books available to truly represent our diverse population. How do we get books that have been removed put back in place, especially books that were on the list by accident? |
| Rockingham County Resident | Didn't read thru all the links. Schools and librarians need to vet material, but I question who makes the decision. This has become a political battleground. Their views and ideas of what is ok can differ greatly from one family tot the next. I firmly want the Govt out of our pockets, healthcare, and control of our kids. Letting someone decide what kids hear, read, and learn as their brains develop is critical. Having someone with intentions other than fundamental education is wrong. | Supporting the wellbeing of the child is key. Do no harm....just like the Dr oath. Several books on the banned list are questionable. I would hope that books are highly vetted and read for content before being banned. | Sexually explicit material does not need to be in elementary and middle school...and needs to be highly vetted at the high school level (and it should not be the entire plot!). Normalizing child sex or grooming has no place in public school. They can read that at home or on the internet with parental oversight. Schools need to focus on preparing kids for employment and adulthood. Mental health needs to be handled by trained psychologist/psychiatrist....not k-12 educators and librarians. |
| Parent/Guardian | Disagree. Parents should be given the opportunity to decide for their child. | Disagree | Disagree. Parents choice not the school board |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Do not restrict available literature, books, etc anymore. Allow parents to request restriction for their own children so it doesn't overstep my parenting decision. Agree or not, we have a right to parent our children how we choose and I want my children to access and explore things that are out in the world and form their own opinions. | Same as above. Less restrictive overall, individual families can make requests to schools about content they want censored. My children are not their concern and do not need to be parented by the school board's ideals. | Let individual parents advocate for what they feel is best for their children. The School Board should leave the educational material selection to the educators and the parents can weigh in about their own children's access. |
| Teacher | Do you need teachers to make an inventory of ALL of our materials that we use in our class? That is a huge undertaking and will require a whole day off to even make a dent in (especially in elementary) If we don't need to do this and a parent submits a complaint about a material that is not inventoried will teachers be at fault? We will need this clarified to protect ourselves as teachers. | What time do we have to do this? Will we be given an extra day this month to do this within the 30 days timeline? Is one day enough? Teachers won't do this so who is going to inventory all of our materials? | See above! |

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| <p>What is your association with RCPS? Please select all that apply.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the revisions of current School Board Policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Don't even pretend you're actually going to read any of this. You've already received feedback from actual professionals which you completely ignored. You are not librarians. Listen to the professionals whose literal job it is to do this. Throw your ridiculously copy & pasted draft in the trash and listen to what the professionals have said.</p> | <p>Put all of the books back in the school until you can provide one shred of evidence Hollie Cave did not copy and paste this clearly bigoted list. There is already a policy in place that you chose to ignore. Stay in your lane, none of you have experience in this field and you are blatantly ignoring the expertise of those who do.</p> | <p>Our own state governor, whom Matt Cross holds in such high esteem, has already declared this to be patently overreaching and that there was no reason to add any clarifications to the state policy on this subject because it is already clear that what you are doing is completely outside the bounds of what the policy was intended for. Every single one of you should be ashamed of yourselves and should be questioning whether you have any business being on this board. But that would require putting your massive egos aside so i know there's no chance of that happening. Put your politics and religious agendas away, it's disgusting.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Excellent</p> | <p>Approved</p> | <p>Approved</p> |

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| <p>Librarian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Film strips are no longer used.</p> | <p>Reference to the Massanutten Regional Library age classification (Why is this included?)</p> <p>I have a big problem with the following: Teachers and librarians shall not acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplementary material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content. It should be changed to shall not knowingly.</p> <p>Deselection of Sexually Explicit Content is not feasible. There are thousands of books in RCPS classrooms and libraries. All books need to follow the procedure from Policy IIABB.</p> <p>Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials is not necessary. Parents already have the ability to see each schools online Destiny catalog which contains new purchases.</p> | <p>According to this policy, the library books already "temporarily removed" should be returned to teachers and libraries until the procedures stated have been completed and a decision made about each individual book. There must be proof that these "temporarily removed" books were actually objected to by RCPS parents, not parents or groups outside of our community. The CRC should also include the RCPS Supervisor of Language Arts. There need to be more teachers or librarians included on the Supplementary Materials Complaint Committee. Both complaint forms must include the following the question: Did you read the entire book before making this complaint? Complaint forms must be made public with names redacted with proof that the complaint is from an actual RCPS parent or student.</p> <p>Final Thoughts: I grew up in Rockingham County. I graduated from RCPS. I have been a classroom teacher and librarian in RCPS for 40 years. I live in Rockingham County. I have never had a book challenge. Books are not a problem! Some of the books on the "temporarily removed" list were in the library when I was a student. Until this year, I have been proud to work in RCPS. Until this year, RCPS has been respected and a sought after place to work. Now many teachers are leaving or trying to leave the school system due to the School Board's actions. Many students from local colleges are not applying to work here because of these actions. I hope you will take these quotes to heart: "I Cannot Live Without books." - - - Thomas Jefferson "Books and ideas are the most effective weapons against intolerance and ignorance." — Lyndon B Johnson "Let us welcome controversial books and controversial authors - - - John F. Kennedy "Don't join the book burners. Do not think you're going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that ever existed. Don't be afraid to go in your library and read every book..."--- Dwight D. Eisenhower</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>Fine</p> | <p>Fine</p> | <p>Could not find this complaint form to view</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Fine, no objections</p> | <p>This statement - Through the selection and deselection of these materials, it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view. - invites a lot of controversy. By stating a parent has this fundamental right, how do you plan to address any issues when one parent's issues and complaints interferes with my fundamental right to allow my children access to different materials?</p> <p>I do not agree with this statement - Supplementary materials do not exist to provide universal coverage but to provide materials focused on all of the above goals. Some materials that are for reading pleasure may not be based on SOL or other of these goals. Students need a variety of materials for pleasure reading. Why stifle this by stating that any materials have to adhere to all of these goals?</p> | <p>Why should the principal have to assist a parent filling out the form? (The principal should assist the complainant in filing a complaint by using the "Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Form.") This form is pretty straight forward. If a parent cannot figure out how to complete this on his/her own, then he/she should not be challenging. Strike this sentence.</p> <p>Up to 90 days is a long time for a review to take place. This could end up hampering a teacher's efforts to instruct students. Teachers are on a timeline to teach their subject matter and may have already moved on to a different topic by the time a decision is made.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>First of all, there were already policies and procedures in place to ban (deselect) books at RCPS. These policies and procedures already gave individual parents a voice as well as the power to control what their children read. You as a school board banned books without going through the established process. Additionally, you didn't read the books that you banned in their entirety. You only read excerpts that were taken out of context.</p> <p>The "sexually explicit" definition that was referenced is overly broad and does not consider context or literary merit. These policies are anti-education and undermine parents' rights. You are banning some books that I as a parent would have allowed my children to read. Where are my parent rights?</p> <p>"Obscene" and sexually explicit" are not interchangeable words. Obscenity, a narrow category of unprotected speech, is not protected by the First Amendment. There are three criteria that need to be met before a piece of writing is considered obscene. The third criteria stands out the most to me: "the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." You need to be paying attention to the context of each book before you as a school board decides to ban it.</p> <p>The three banned books that I read from the RCPS list while having some sexually explicit, but NOT OBSCENE sections WHEN TAKEN AS A WHOLE convey important themes that need to be addressed and discussed like diversity, inclusivity, racism, prejudice, segregation, respect for all people, etc. Some of these books represent marginalized and underrepresented students. Their voices need to be heard so the rest of us can develop empathy and understanding for people different from ourselves.</p> | <p>The majority of the books that you want to ban or remove from our libraries, both school and classroom, and other forms of supplemental materials do not pass the obscenity test. They may have sexually explicit content, but they are not obscene. Libraries should be allowed to provide for our students diverse, inclusive, historically significant, and prize winning literature. There are guidelines that clearly define obscene content, and librarians know how to use them. These guidelines are narrow enough to prevent the mass removal of books. The school board should be concerned about obscene content but not the over broad definition of sexually explicit.</p> | <p>I repeat that the school board should be concerned about obscene content but not the over broad definition of sexually explicit. Books that are developmentally appropriate is another important consideration. The term "age-appropriate" or developmentally appropriate means suitable topics or messages that match the developmental and social maturity of the particular age of children or adolescents. This is based on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development of a certain age child. This should also guide the selection of books. For example, a book that a junior in high school is reading may not be developmentally appropriate for a sixth grader. It's important to consider developmental levels or age-appropriateness when selecting or in the case of the RCPS school board banning books for students. Banning books based on only one criteria, sexually explicit content, is a narrow way to review books. The context of a book must be taken into account.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>First, this is a poorly constructed survey for soliciting a meaningful qualitative response. I would have hoped that within the school system there would have been someone who could have assisted in constructing a qualitative survey.</p> <p>1. Please provide your feedback to the revisions of current School Board Policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials.</p> <p>My concerns are on both a process and policy level. The process does not appear to have been open to the community in a meaningful and accessible manner. The survey does not appear on the School Board tabs on the Rockingham County Schools site making it particularly difficult for parents to access. The school board does not appear to have followed its own statements regarding open hearings and processes that involve parents and the entire Rockingham County community. The survey is difficult to find and has a short deadline thus truncating the opportunity for meaningful participation by parents and county citizens who are also stakeholders. The draft policies presented in the survey and proposed by the board should not be adopted until more parent and public input has time to be reasonably occur. The School Board's actions around this survey make it appear that a robust and inclusive is not wanted or valued.</p> <p>From a policy perspective, the draft policy does not address literature/books as a whole but focuses on specific lines, out of context, in the body of each book. This action directly contradicts the 1973 Supreme Court Miller Test guidelines for determining obscenity. They are: 1. whether the average person applying contemporary community standards would find the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; 2. whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and 3. whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. The court specifically determines that the complaint must be taken as an entire body of work. The Miller Test must be part and parcel of the presented draft policy.</p> <p>The implications of this draft policy have real impacts for our Rockingham County students' post-graduation for both those who enter the workforce and those who pursue higher education or technical education. An overarching purpose of public education is to prepare students for the world they will live and work in. This includes being exposed to the difficult issues of the day and providing them the guidance on how to better understand and address these issues. Literature often provides a meaningful segue to better prepare and engage students. Furthermore, the policy and school board actions seem to be aimed at minority students, creating a dangerous and unsafe school building and learning environment for them.</p> <p>Additionally, none of the questions in the survey</p> | <p>2. Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection.</p> <p>This proposed policy should not be adopted until more opportunities for public and parental comments are afforded. Please refer to the issues I raised in responding to question # 1. As a former middle school teacher, the section requiring teachers to report all supplemental materials to the school board is an attack on teacher's professionalism, education, and licensure. This unnecessary and intrusive policy will create a toxic work environment and further add to teacher retention issues.</p> | <p>3. Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials</p> <p>I have expressed my personal concerns as a former middle school social studies teacher, parent of RCPS graduates and as a concerned citizen. I am firmly opposed to the adoption of the draft of the School Board Policy IIABB. Additionally, this policy should not be adopted until more public input, in a variety formats, and with an extended time frame is provided. The policy needs to reflect input from ALL STAKEHOLDERS, members of the RCPS community and the Rockingham community.</p> |

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| <p>Staff member, Librarian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Formatting tools, such as using red font and highlighting are not compatible with the form. I apologize if this makes it harder to discern the information I have posted in this form. I felt it important to highlight or differentiate when I refer directly to parts of the policy in which I have responded to. Thank you for taking the time to read my opinions and I hope we can work together to facilitate this policy into one that will bring satisfaction to all involved.</p> <p>First, I do not believe the two members of this board constitute a fair, unbiased committee, or even a committee. I believe the two members of this committee share similar beliefs about the subject. It appears that the committee was formed to promote their agenda of severely limiting access to books and other supplemental materials and to hold tight control and impose a conceived, authoritarian majority view over an educational institution that serves a diverse population. A fair committee should have at least five members and seek members of opposing views and professionals that could add insight and guidance to the process. If this committee had been larger and more diversified, many of the items I address in this policy would probably be avoided. Librarians and other teachers have been largely left out of or hampered in their attempts to having a working relationship with this school board.</p> <p>Policy IIAB* Supplemental materials are those non-instructional items, regardless of format which are used to assist the teaching and learning process and include but are not limited to such items as school library books, classroom library books, magazines, newspapers, charts, pictures, certain workbooks, kits, videos, film strips, and games. Materials selected for supplemental use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used, or be otherwise available in the school library or classroom library for supplemental use.</p> <p>*As the policy IIAB relates to policy IIABA Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection. IIABA</p> <p>Are you asking teachers (classroom, reading, SPED, PE, music, art, and so on) and librarians to submit all items listed as supplemental to the principal or designee? Would this include not only books, but maps (charts), games (chess, checkers, Rush Hour, and so on), phonics materials and games created by the teacher/reading teacher not included in the basal series, classroom magazines such as National Geographic Kids, works of art, supplementary skill workbooks for struggling learners, PE/recess equipment, hands on materials such as plants, rocks, and food items. quest</p> | <p>IIABA SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION The Rockingham County School Board is committed to the philosophy of "Empowering ALL Learners" why is this written as a title and in quotation marks? Is it referring to or quoted from another source?. This mission is accomplished in part by its selection of instructional materials, as defined in School Board Policy IIA. The Rockingham County School Board recognizes that teachers and librarians may undertake to select and provide supplementary materials, as that term is defined in School Board Policy IIAB, to students to further enrich student learning by:</p> <p>I would like to focus on these points in my comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creating a caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity within our community and beyond; •Providing a balanced collection reflecting various points of view; •Promoting critical thinking skills; •Supporting a variety of learning and teaching styles; •Supporting leisure reading among students. </p> <p>In creating an environment of richness in diversity, supplemental materials play an integral role in students' education. Our community is becoming more diverse every day and this diversity needs to be represented in supplemental materials. As students grow and mature, they need materials that will challenge their views and help them define and deduce what their values are in conjunction to what they have been taught by their parents.</p> <p>I grew up in a very sheltered environment and attended a private Christian high school in the late 1970's. But, at age 16, I took a job in a restaurant with a diverse population of teens and adults where drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex were common. My high school library had a diverse selection of books that I could read and classes where I learned about different points of view in the world. I read, Go Ask Alice by Beatrice Sparks, a title on your list of removed books. There is profanity, prostitution, and drug use in the story. The book did not glorify these elements and did not encourage me to participate in them. Books like Go Ask Alice gave me various points of view of people who did not live in the community and home environment I had, and promoted critical thinking skills to better understand and have compassion for people who came from different environments. That does not mean I accepted their actions as a 16-year-old, but instead I could be a better co-worker and peer in relating to and working alongside of them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing materials on a wide range of ability levels, chosen to reflect the various student populations; I refer you back to my two earlier statements about what constitutes supplemental materials and empowering all learners when providing materials on a wide range of ability levels and chosen to reflect various student populations. It does not state "majority" populations. <p>In pursuit of the foregoing goals, the Rockingham</p> | <p>IIABB Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Procedure Complaints about supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content will be presented in writing using the "Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Form" provided for in this Policy, which may be obtained from the principal, the central office, or the School Board policy manual on the RCPS website. The standard procedure of review for supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content shall be consistently applied in recognition of the respective rights and responsibilities of all concerned. Challenges will be submitted to building principals, but referred directly to the Content Review Committee ("CRC") for review. The CRC will review the challenged supplementary materials and provide a recommendation to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will review the CRC's recommendation and provide his or her own recommendation to the School Board. The School Board's decision will be final.</p> <p>Procedure A parent or guardian of a student who challenges the use of a Supplementary material, whether located in a classroom library, school library, or elsewhere, which purportedly contains sexually explicit content, should be given an explanation of the following procedure for challenged Supplementary Materials. The principal should assist the complainant in filing a complaint by using the "Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Form." The principal should then submit the form and the challenged supplementary material to the Superintendent or designee.</p> <p>The Superintendent or designee will convene the CRC to review the challenged supplementary material, prepare a written report, and submit its recommendation to the Superintendent. The CRC shall include seven (7) members, including: (i) a school librarian or teacher; (ii) an Assistant Superintendent; (iii) the Supervisor of Media Services; (iv) a member of the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee; and (v) three (3) parents, guardians, or other community members. The CRC will be appointed by the Superintendent at the beginning of the academic year and it will serve for the duration of that academic year including through the summer. The CRC will have up to ninety (90) days to review the challenged supplementary material and provide a recommendation to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will review the CRC's recommendation and provide his or her own recommendation to the School Board.</p> <p>The School Board will make the final decision by instructing the principal to retain, modify, or remove the challenged supplementary material. The School Board's decision will apply to all schools within Rockingham County Public Schools, not just the school from where the complaint originated.</p> <p>It seems with this statement that the school board is taking the final decision in this matter out of the hands of</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Fully support the new proposed policy. | Fully support the new policy. Sexually explicit materials have no place in schools. | Fully support the new policy. |
| Parent/Guardian | Good | Good | Good |
| Rockingham County Resident | Good revisions. Appropriate addition of Virginia law regarding sexuality explicit materials. | The policy is a great addition. Tying supplemental materials to the curriculum, supporting critical thinking skills and presenting different viewpoints is important. Acknowledging and respecting the role of parents is and critical value to uphold. | The procedure seems appropriate and reasonable. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I 100% disagree with the proposed policies! These backward and barbaric policies are from yesteryear and do not reflect the majority of Rockingham County residents. Stop banning books and let the children learn! If you don't want your child to read something, then don't let them read it but don't make choices for the entire county because if your unrealistic views!!!! | I 100% disagree with the proposed policies! These backward and barbaric policies are from yesteryear and do not reflect the majority of Rockingham County residents. Stop banning books and let the children learn! If you don't want your child to read something, then don't let them read it but don't make choices for the entire county because if your unrealistic views!!!! | I 100% disagree with the proposed policies! These backward and barbaric policies are from yesteryear and do not reflect the majority of Rockingham County residents. Stop banning books and let the children learn! If you don't want your child to read something, then don't let them read it but don't make choices for the entire county because if your unrealistic views!!!! |
| Parent/Guardian | I agree | I agree | I agree |
| Staff member, Teacher, Rockingham County Resident | I agree that sexually explicit material should not be used in school. However, your proposed policies have the threat of creating situations where materials that are appropriate that may be misunderstood by members of the community will be challenged and we won't be able to use them for a substantial period of time. Respectfully, I feel that you are devaluing our professional viewpoints and creating censorship of faculty and staff. Are we perfect? No. Are there materials that maybe we should reevaluate? Absolutely. But, the political climate behind this situation in our current county is exacerbating the issue. Therefore, I would like to support reconsideration of these draft policies. | I agree that sexually explicit material should not be used in school. However, your proposed policies have the threat of creating situations where materials that are appropriate that may be misunderstood by members of the community will be challenged and we won't be able to use them for a substantial period of time. Respectfully, I feel that you are devaluing our professional viewpoints and creating censorship of faculty and staff. Are we perfect? No. Are there materials that maybe we should reevaluate? Absolutely. But, the political climate behind this situation in our current county is exacerbating the issue. Therefore, I would like to support reconsideration of these draft policies. | I agree that sexually explicit material should not be used in school. However, your proposed policies have the threat of creating situations where materials that are appropriate that may be misunderstood by members of the community will be challenged and we won't be able to use them for a substantial period of time. Respectfully, I feel that you are devaluing our professional viewpoints and creating censorship of faculty and staff. Are we perfect? No. Are there materials that maybe we should reevaluate? Absolutely. But, the political climate behind this situation in our current county is exacerbating the issue. Therefore, I would like to support reconsideration of these draft policies. |
| Parent/Guardian | I agree with the current school board decision | I agree with the current school board decision | I agree with the current school board decision |
| Parent/Guardian | I agree with the current school board decision | I agree with the current school board decision | I agree with the current school board decision |
| Rockingham County Resident | I agree with the draft policy. | I agree with this section of the policy. | I agree with this section of the policy. Good job. Thank you. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I agree with the proposed policy changes. | I agree with the proposed policy changes | I agree with the proposed policy changes. |
| Parent/Guardian | I agree with the revisions that sexually explicit materials are to be removed and prohibited from classrooms and school libraries. | I agree with the policy. | In general, the policy looks good. Perhaps I missed this portion, but I did question what happens during the 90 days that the CRC has to review material that is reported. Does the explicit material remain available to students within that 90 day window the CRC has to make their decision or is it removed? |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I agree with these policies. Sexually explicit material should not be in school libraries. | I agree with this policy. Sexually explicit materials should not be in school libraries. | I am happy to see a process that allows for review and challenge of sexually explicit materials. I do not want sexually explicit materials in schools. |

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| Rockingham County Resident | I agree with this draft because Supplementary materials and their purpose are clearly defined. The selection process emphasizes the importance of having the materials reflect the content areas being addressed. | I agree with the criteria for selecting/deselecting materials. I also agree strongly with the emphasis placed on the parents' role in their child's education. Finally, I am in agreement with the statement: Teachers and librarians shall not acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplementary material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content. It is a clear, non-ambiguous statement as the term is defined in VA code. | I am in agreement with this draft. The steps for filing a complaint, review of materials, recommendations, and how the final decision are clear and concise. My one concern is with the length of time. All parties involved have the right to a fair and expedited decision, therefore, I would suggest a 30-day period. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I agree with this plan. | I agree with this plan. | I agree with this plan. |
| Staff member, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I agree with this policy | I agree with this policy | I agree with this policy |
| Parent/Guardian | I agree with this policy. Sexually explicit materials have no place in our schools. I also agree with administrators, librarians and teachers at each school being responsible to exercise professional judgement in the selection and integration of materials and being held accountable as such. | Thank you for this. I agree with these policies wholeheartedly and while no policy is perfect this is a step to protect our children in their formative years and I so appreciate our School Board caring enough to take this on. My sister was assigned to read a sexually explicit book in high school that was nothing like my high school experience 15 years before. My dad had to step in and say "my daughter can do an alternative assignment but she is not allowed to finish reading this book (Boy's Life). I feel this will address these situations so parents do not have to step in like this. I am so proud of our school system here and the fact that we are vigilant in correcting this and protecting our students for the future. | Glad there will be a pathway to report these materials and a procedure through due process and diligence to remove them if need be. Again, thank you! |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I agree with this policy. Sexually explicit content should be removed from public school libraries. If or when necessary these materials can be obtained from local public libraries for free therefore unnecessary to be in areas with mostly underage students and bought with tax payer funds. | I agree with this policy. | I agree with this policy. |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I am a big supporter of parent involvement and I want to encourage parents to take an active role in their child's education. I think a big part of parents being involved in their child's education is knowing what books their child is reading/interested in and having those conversations with them. I agree that not all books are appropriate for every child and parents should absolutely be able to choose if their child reads a certain book or not. That being said, the school system already has a plan in place for when this happens. Parents currently have the ability to receive notifications when their child checks a book out of the library. This notification alerts parents to all the books their child is checking out and reading. If their child checks out a book they do not approve of, the parents are able to have that conversation with their child and make sure the book is returned before the book can be read. This plan [of being notified when students check out books] is great because it helps parents keep on eye on what their kids are reading, but it does not limit the book selections of other students. Many students do not have the money to purchase the books they want to read and/or have the transportation to get to the public library to borrow books. While many of my students are not avid readers, those that are are not the students who are behavior concerns. With the policy that is being drafted, many books will be taken off our library shelves for sexually explicit content. With students having access to the internet through their phones and Chromebooks, I don't think books are where they are getting their sexually explicit content from. While I rarely hear students talk about the different books they are reading, explicit or not, I do often hear them talk about a movie, TV show, TikTok, ect. that are violent and sexually explicit. Taking books out of our libraries will not stop students from being exposed to such content. I ask the board to please leave books on our library shelves and leave it up to each individual family to decide if their child is mature enough to read a certain book or not.</p> | <p>I love Rockingham County schools; I moved to the county when I was in the second grade and I feel lucky to have received the education that I did. When looking for teaching jobs, I was determined to be hired in RCPS because in my mind, there was no county better and I still believe that to be true. That being said, I believe that this current policy, and future policies like this, will result in great librarians and teachers to leave Rockingham County. If parents are concerned about what their children are reading, I believe there is a better way to alleviate those concerns.</p> | <p>I believe that if a book is going to be challenged, the book that is being challenged and the reasons behind it should be shared with the public. Many books that have been temporarily taken out of our libraries did not have a reason for the removal; the list simply mentions "parent complaint."</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I am beyond thankful for the school board in recognizing the importance of this policy. I can speak as a parent that has a student that has been affected by inappropriate books in schools. I have seen many of these titles in my student's backpack and as a parent I am absolutely mortified of the content she has been exposed to. It has completely changed our daughter negatively and impacted her mental health. We have pondered since 6th grade on the changes with our daughter, and now it is crystal clear where this change has been coming from, exposure of sexual content and inappropriate content in schools. My daughter has been most exposed to this in school, through these books and inability to block explicit websites in school via Chromebook (finally resolved after three years!). This is not okay! Schools should feel like a safe environment for us to send our children to. In addition, school is not a place for students to be "finding themselves". This comes later in life when their brain develops. In addition, this is unrelated, but I thank the school board for eventually following the Governor's policies on name changes in school. These students do not have rights and when I say that, they are too young to be making a decision to change their name. It is the parent's rights, as they are not 18. School is a place for learning the necessary skills and materials to make them prepared for the real world. It is inappropriate to allow such books in schools that reference heavily (including graphically) sexual content, murder, suicide, rape, and more. I am in favor, 100% for these books to be pulled from the libraries. The one hiccup I have with these revisions it is places it on the schools to decide which books. I believe this should across the board consistent in Rockingham Co. I hope that all administration across Rockingham Co. take this seriously and follow the guidelines set forth from the board.</p> | <p>I do like in this draft that we focus on Empowering ALL Learners, but focusing on this in a positive manner. Our world today is full of hatred and unkind individuals. School should influence positivity. When you over sexualize our children, and place materials in their hands that focus on suicide and other negative items.. this takes a toll on our children's mental health. They should not be exposed to such materials, school should be a safe environment. I do like in the policy that there is a process for librarians to submit a request to gain approval to use intended materials that contain questionable objectives. I urge the board to be strict on the content you are approving.</p> | <p>I am a little confused about this policy. Is this just the process in the event that student's have been exposed to such content via books, magazines, such? I understand there is a policy to face such challenges, but it is common sense that these materials should be pulled and I hope that is the case. It has created so much damage to our children, including mine. Health/Sexual Education should be the ONLY place that sexual content should be discussed and it should be limited on how it is taught. Our students should not be exposed to pornographic pictures to show them the different positions of sexual intercourse. It was a bit more conservative when I was in school (as it should be), and our generation saw very different results in school which included positivity and kindness. How will us parents know what materials will be pulled and what is not? When it is too late and they are already exposed to it? As an adolescent, you can not "unseen" some of these images or forget them.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I am concerned with the review process of "sexually explicit." Who decides this and what is the process? Are all books that mention sex, sexual orientation, heavy kissing, abuse or rape going to be eliminated? As parents and community members we deserve more information on this policy and how it will be implemented in a non biased way. I am extremely uncomfortable with how this is being implemented and the lack of communication and community input. I want librarians and educators that understand young people's literature and the context of sexually explicit content to make these decisions.</p> | <p>Will one parent's concern rise above what is good for the majority of learners? How will that be decided?</p> | <p>I pray the CRC will contain more librarians and educators than people with a political agenda or strong ideologies that they perceive as morally right for everyone . How will the competency of the people in the CRC be determined? I can understand parents not wanting their children to read certain books. I would suggest parents have a way to not let their children check those books out, without controlling the access of other children.</p> |

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| <p>Librarian</p> | <p>I am disappointed that another round table was not held with the county librarians as was indicated during the work session in February. After the work session, librarians across the county worked together to create a policy that addressed all of the concerns the board had.</p> <p>The policy the RCPS school board has drawn up does not follow best practices as outlined by the AASL.</p> | <p>I am concerned with the lack of specific direction for what defines sexually explicit. According to the code, sexually explicit materials are any that indicate sexual excitement. Depending on the review committee and/or final determination of the board, something as simple as a kiss or a longing look could be construed as sexual excitement.</p> <p>If you are not allowing the people who are professionally trained to select age appropriate materials to use their judgment, I would like specific guidelines on when an encounter can be defined as causing sexual excitement.</p> <p>By providing very specific guidance to us, we will not waste county money by purchasing books that we think are okay just to have them challenged. Providing specific guidance will avoid this.</p> | <p>I do not think materials can be rightfully assessed without taking the work as a whole. This has been proven at the highest level of courts in our country. It is disappointing that a complaint about a library book is not first directed to the librarian. We should be the first point of contact for anyone who has concerns about books in our collection.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I am fairly certain there isn't language strong enough to describe my opposition to these policies and this school board. I have trust and faith in the schools themselves, the teachers, and librarians as trained educators who have actually gotten to know my children in their combined 20 years within RCPS. I do not have this level of trust in our current school board given that their actions are against their own running slogan of parent choice. They are choosing to take MY rights away as a parent in this situation, and they are doing so based on the actions of one man who claims to have spent more than 2 years researching but still got a harmless picture book with exactly ZERO explicit content "temporarily removed" because he couldn't get the correct author. If this board trusts this man, and cannot appropriate vet 57 books, why on earth should I trust them with tens of thousands of titles?</p> <p>Their actions are also in direct violation of the governors model policies, and from his recent wording which states "the act shall not be construed to require of provide for the censoring of books in public elementary and secondary schools"</p> <p>By and large, I would prefer my kids not read sexually explicit materials, but of the books that they (and I) have read off of the original list, there is no content that I would consider explicit in any way. And those discussions would be for me to have with my children, because I encourage their curiosity rather than banish it. I can tell you from experience that the fastest way to make something more desirable is to try to make it taboo. It's the way of human kind, and always has been. After all, didn't Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit? By the way, since the board seems so careful to state they are not going after lgbtqia topics only, I would have to ask why in none of the 57 books are there heterosexual relationships? Game of Thrones remains available, and in one book there is depiction of a brother raping his sister on top of her husbands grave. Romeo and Juliet have physical contact in their story. Hamlet talks of incest. None of these books were considered.....all have sexual topics, but all are heterosexual.</p> <p>All of these policies are nothing more than power plays towards this board's desire to decimate all public education so that money can be steered towards their chosen religious based education, and it serves to undermine religious choice, religious freedom, and the first amendment.</p> <p>As I am absolutely certain that no one will actually read, much less respond to my concerns and comments, I will simply copy and paste my responses into the other questions as my concerns are the same regarding ALL policies brought by this power hungry school anti American board.</p> | <p>I am fairly certain there isn't language strong enough to describe my opposition to these policies and this school board. I have trust and faith in the schools themselves, the teachers, and librarians as trained educators who have actually gotten to know my children in their combined 20 years within RCPS. 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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I am glad that the school board is taking steps toward removing inappropriate sexual content. | I love that there is a system in place for dealing with this. | Sounds good. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I am in agreement with the revisions | I am in agreement with the supplemental materials selection | I am in agreement with the draft |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I am in complete support to the revisions of the current policy. As a former teacher, I know that there will be many teachers who feel inconvenienced by this. It is a shame that it has come to this in our county, but it is necessary to make sure that teachers and librarians are making the right choices for our students. | I'm totally in support of this. It is very thorough. | I am very glad that there is a procedure that will be in place to challenge inappropriate material. Thank you Superintendent Shifflett and the School Board for all your hard work. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I am in favor of the revision for Policy IIAB. | I am in favor of Policy IIABA | I am in favor of Policy IIABB |
| Rockingham County Resident | I am not clear on why sexually explicit content is singled out for exclusion. Nowhere is there a mention of depictions of violence, racism, or disparaging classist content, which, among other content, have just as much potential for harm as sexually explicit content. It's about how school staff and families help kids understand content more than it is about exposure. | See above | See above. Parents ought to be able to curb access to materials they deem culturally inappropriate for their child, but it is unclear this policy will be nimble enough to allow each family to customize access, but rather will adapt access for all students to the kind of access desired by the most culturally dominant elements in each area. |
| Parent/Guardian | I am ok with policies that allow parents to choose what books their own child reads. I highly suggest in lieu of banning any materials, the books the board thinks are inappropriate come up with a color code system that parents can choose their child not be able to check out. Leave the choices up to parents. | No comment. | Stop banning books in general. Leave the choice up to parents on what we think is appropriate for our children to read. |
| Parent/Guardian | I am opposed to making these changes. We already have appropriate policies in place, and have professionals trained to make appropriate decisions regarding the materials. | I am opposed to making these changes. We already have appropriate policies in place, and have professionals trained to make appropriate decisions regarding the materials. | I am opposed to making these changes. We already have appropriate policies in place for handling complaints. |
| Parent/Guardian | I am opposed to these revisions. The pervious policy was sufficient. | I am opposed to this draft policy. Please seek feedback from school librarians who are experts in their field. This does not meet the needs of all students and only serves to further a political agenda. | I am opposed to this draft policy. Please seek feedback from school librarians. This does not meet the needs of all students. Keep politics out of our schools. |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I am opposed to using the term "Prohibited" in this policy. Governor Youngkin's model policies do not include prohibition, they ask schools to ensure parental notification of and alternative choices for instructional materials whether required or supplemental. The sexually explicit definition leaves room for interpretation as demonstrated by the school board's action of removing more than 50 books from school shelves, the majority of which have no sexually explicit material as per the definition in VA Code. Interpretations of the sexually explicit definition can be applied to prohibiting content used in high level high school courses thus restricting student access. Courses including but not limited to Biology, Anatomy & Physiology, AP Psychology, AP Art, AP Literature, AP Language and all dual enrollment courses would be affected by this policy as it is currently written. "Prohibition" would limit access to high level courses that prepare our college bound students for post secondary success. RCPS already has very limited offerings for our high achieving students despite being one of the larger school divisions in the region. Prohibiting materials will further restrict access to these courses putting RCPS students at a disadvantage when competing for acceptance at the best post secondary institutions across the state and country.</p> <p>I am firmly opposed to using the term "Prohibited" in this policy. To do so would restrict high school student access to course appropriate curricular materials that have been vetted and recommended by highly qualified educational professionals. I am in favor of parent notification and parental rights to request alternative materials.</p> | <p>None</p> | <p>I am concerned that the CRC is made up of 4 parents and only 1 librarian or teacher. At minimum there should be a librarian AND teacher. I would like to know how the parents on the CRC will be selected and how will you ensure that different parent perspectives are represented. Why is the CRC larger than the committee designated for reviewing content contested by the media policy?</p> <p>This form needs to request the material being contested to be clearly listed with specific pages and or portions of the media that is being contested along with the specific reasoning the material is being contested.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I am quite concerned to hear that the input of our librarians was not considered in drafting any of these policies. They have had years of training to do their jobs and should be trusted to do the work they were hired for. I would like to know THEIR perspectives on these policies, and would like to see their redlines.</p> | <p>I am quite concerned to hear that the input of our librarians was not considered in drafting any of these policies. They have had years of training to do their jobs and should be trusted to do the work they were hired for. I would like to know THEIR perspectives on these policies, and would like to see their redlines.</p> | <p>We have hired our librarians and school administrators based on their years of education and appropriate credentials to do their jobs. It is inappropriate to designate final approval authority to our School Board members, who have not gone through years of intensive training to do their jobs. If there is to be an entire committee (which, in itself is a colossal waste of taxpayer dollars) dedicated to reviewing books that have fallen into a complaint, and that committee is made up of seven individuals, including those who have gone through this extensive education and credentialing, there is absolutely no value addition by having the final recommendation sent to another level.</p> |

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| <p>Staff member, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I am thinking I might submit a FOIA request for an inventory of the number of film strips that currently are being used in RCPS and what taxpayer dollars this encumbers on a yearly basis. I would additionally like a clearer definition of the term "game". Does Simon Says count as a game, does tag, what about a daily Wordle type puzzle on a classroom wall? Is a puzzle a game? Are we differentiating between games that happen in P. E. curriculum compared to games played during indoor recess in an elementary classroom as children develop motor and social skills? What about items that are brought into a classroom by a speaker- think of the Jamestown in the classroom project-- how are these vetted?</p> | <p>In this policy, it states that "Parents have a fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." Is there any boundary to this assigned right? On some level, isn't choosing to send your child to a public school an expressed, or at least implied, desire to have them learn basic reading, writing, math and science? As written, this policy would allow a parent to say they didn't want their child to be exposed to vowels or the color green or they didn't believe in basic numeracy and should not be exposed to single digit addition or subtraction. I feel that more precise language in this section would be beneficial.</p> <p>Who establishes and revised the Massanutten Regional age classification system? By referencing an outside entity for age appropriate guidance, their systems and checks and balances should be articulated more fully in this policy.</p> | <p>I cannot respond to this given the the referenced forms, specifically the "Media Complaint Form" and "Media Complaint Response Form" are not provided and their content and structure is integral to an intelligent and informed reading of this policy.</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I am very displeased and concerned that none of the recommendations made by the librarians in our county were put into consideration or adopted in the policies present.</p> | <p>see previous comment</p> | <p>see previous comment</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I appreciate that responsibility for selection of materials remains at the school level.</p> <p>I do not agree with a ban on "sexually explicit" content as currently stated, because it does not take context into account. Although many of the activities defined in Virginia Code §2.2-2827 are definitely NOT appropriate for schools to make available to young adult readers, it prohibits includes even basic representations of "sexual conduct". How on earth are our children going to receive basic biological information as part of their education under this narrow definition? How can they engage with narratives that allow them to think critically about human sexuality in age-appropriate ways? That part of Virginia code currently used in the proposed policy is intended to define how state employees should use their state-issued computers in a professional fashion; it's not intended to capture the nuances of sexual content in an educational context.</p> <p>Virginia Code 18.2-391, which addresses content prohibited to sell or loan to juveniles, is much more appropriate for our context. It is accompanied by an excellent definition of how content might be "harmful to juveniles":</p> <p>"Harmful to juveniles" means that quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse, when it (a) predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of juveniles, (b) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles, and (c) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for juveniles. (18.2-390)</p> | <p>I do not support the ban on sexually explicit conduct, given that these policies currently use the definition given in Virginia Code § 2.2-2827, which would basically prohibit any representation of sexual conduct. Sex is an important part of human life, and books for young adults should be engaging with sex in developmentally-appropriate ways. This narrow definition, if truly applied as written, would remove classics and major religious texts from our shelves, as well as books on human biology and quite a few books that are routinely studied in AP English classes, Scholastic Bowl academic competitions, etc. We would be lowering the quality of education available through RCPS and limiting opportunities for our own students. Our collections would not meet other goals stated in this policy--staying current, fostering critical thinking, providing a diverse range of viewpoints.</p> <p>I want my children to receive a quality, current education through RCPS, and as a parent, I fear that this policy as currently written will actually interfere with their learning opportunities.</p> <p>One of my children has an intellectual disability, and in order to teach her about sex and promote her sexual safety, we need to provide her with clear, simple images and words about human sexual development, reproduction, and safe and appropriate conduct, and I look forward to working with her educators on making content accessible and appropriate for her as we move into middle and high school. Another word for clear is "explicit." Sometimes, explicit sexual content is exactly what we need to protect and prepare our children and teens.</p> <p>As noted in my response to Policy IIAB, a simple shift in the Virginia code we reference to prohibit "sexual content that is harmful to juveniles" (18.2-390/18.2-391) rather than "sexually explicit content" would give teachers, librarians, principles, content review committees, and the board itself flexibility to apply common sense to screenings of material, allowing us to retain classics, materials with literary quality, and materials that serve specific purposes in teaching about biology, family life, etc.</p> <p>I understand that other parents may have different perspectives on what representations of sexual conduct are appropriate for their children, and would strongly support using our existing policies and cataloging infrastructure--or creating additional policies and infrastructure--that would allow teachers/librarians to tag materials with sexual content, and give parents the option to veto their children's access to it. This would offer the requested protections and would not infringe on my own rights as a parent to seek well-rounded access to contemporary, quality educational materials for my children. It would increase transparency, trust, and parent engagement across the system.</p> <p>I do appreciate that librarians will not have to submit proposed acquisitions for review prior to purchasing</p> | <p>I don't believe complaints about sexually explicit materials need to be accelerated to the system-wide level unlike other complaints. This interferes with important opportunities for engagement between parents, teachers, librarians, and principals at the school level. Let's use the same process for all complaints.</p> <p>I would like to see more detail about how the challenged materials will be reviewed. Will we follow the precedent of having the materials read as a whole by committee members? Will they consider the intended use of the materials and how they are part of national/academic conversations? (For instance, is it for a biology class? Is it an award-winning book that will be referenced in AP courses or standardized testing?)</p> |

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| Rockingham County Resident | I approve of these changes. Thank you for making a better effort to protect the children of this county from inappropriate and fruitless materials. | I approve of these changes. Thank you for making a better effort to protect the children of this county from inappropriate and fruitless materials. | I approve of these changes. Thank you for recognizing the importance of parental involvement in public education. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I believe that libraries should hold a wide variety of books from many perspectives, including those written by and about LGBTQ issues, and sexuality. How else but by sharing stories can we empathize with those in our community who are different from us? | I think schools can be an important place for discussion around LGBTQ issues and sexuality. These topics are real and part of every child's life as they grow up. | Please err on the side of inclusion rather than banning. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I believe that teachers and librarians are the people who should be deciding which books are appropriate for individual students. If individual parents want to censor their children's reading they have the power to do that. They must not have the power to control the availability of any book for all students. We are seeing the tyranny of the minority (sometimes a minority of one). Do not disregard parents (and students) who are pleased with the choices made by teachers and librarians. A student who is not allowed to read has no advantage over a student who can not read. | The process of banning any book is subject to interpretation of words. It is ironic that students will be denied the opportunity to learn how the read and interpret what they read based on what one or two or anything less that 50% of the parents of students think. | I have seen the list of books challenged by some parents and I believe that some of those parents are incapable of rationally parsing the "code of Virginia". I am not sure that the legislators are able to do so either. The process of banning any book is subject to interpretation of words. It is ironic that students will be denied the opportunity to learn how the read and interpret what they read based on what one or two or anything less that 50% of the parents of students think. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I believe that the responsibility should come from parent/guardians, not librarians or school officials. too much inconsistency with the different schools | again, this is a parent/guardian decision, NOT librarians or individual school officials | again, this should not be on the individual schools or administration- parent/guardian decision |
| Rockingham County Resident | I believe this whole process is unnecessary. The School Board has made a grave error and should simply step away from this. | Again, none of this was needed. You are damaging our community. | I taught in RCPS for 26 years and I can say with confidence, this is the worst School Board that has ever existed. Your overt religious malpractice is offensive and seriously damaging to students and our community. |
| Parent/Guardian | I can't believe the school board of Rockingham county is banning books that they have not read or researched. They are completely undermining the librarians and educators and have no business being involved in the book selection for the libraries. The board should be focused on effectively governing and guiding and not creating diversions and distractions that detract from the education of our children. | I am embarrassed to say I live in Rockingham County with the current board and the incredibly stupid decisions and antics on display. They have no business being a leader of any sort in our community. | I think the board needs to leave the decision on what is appropriate for the library to the librarians and educators who have been trained and are using valid criteria in their selection process. They are not merely choosing books based on rumor and websites with a political agenda. |
| Librarian, Rockingham County Resident | I concur with your policy. | I concur with your policy. | I concur with your policy. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I concur. | I concur. | I concur. One question I have. What will be the mechanism for communicating these policies and options for parental involvement to potentially concerned parents? I would suggest that multiple means of highlighting and communicating these policies to parents be employed. |

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| <p>Librarian</p> | <p>I currently use a high degree of professional judgement in selecting materials and will continue to do so.</p> | <p>See comments in the following section.</p> | <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed draft policy for supplementary materials. I have two main points of feedback, both relating to policy IIABB. The first is regarding the makeup of the CRC and the school and division-level committees formed in the review process for challenged materials. The seven-member committee comprises three staff members and four parents in all three cases. I understand the need to have an odd number of committee members. However, the committee needs to be reconfigured so that representation includes four educators (librarian, teacher, Assistant Superintendent, and Director of Media Services) and three parents (including the member of the parent advisory committee). I understand that with an odd number of members, the balance will be in the direction of educators or parents. The discussion will likely lead to a common understanding among all committee members. Parents always have the final say in what materials are available to their children. The policy states, "Teachers and librarians will work with parents and guardians to ensure that their child's supplementary material selections are appropriate based on guidelines or preferences provided by the parent or guardian on a case by case basis." However, in cases where a decision is being made for all students in RCPS, the committee should be weighted in the direction of educators. As librarians and teachers, we have taken classes, participated in professional development, and worked directly with students. As such, our input needs to be valued and respected, especially when a book is being removed or retained for all students in an educational setting.</p> <p>My second point of feedback relates to the evaluation process. The policy does not explicitly state how the CRC or other committee will evaluate a book or whether the committee will read the book. By evaluating parts or selections from a book, one loses the contextual meaning or purpose intended by the author. Reading the book and analyzing it as a whole is crucial in determining its literary value and should be a consideration for the evaluating committee. The expectation that reviewers will read the entire text will also add credibility and trust to the process and decisions made. Please consider an addition to the policy indicating committee members must read the entire book when considering challenged material.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I disagree with the idea that all supplementary materials purchased by a school must align directly to a specific educational standard/course objective/content area, specifically when it relates to books in a classroom or school library. Literature is meant to expand our perspectives and expose us to ideas and ways of thinking that we may not normally encounter, even as part of a curriculum. I find the requirement to tie media specifically to an educational purpose to be limiting in scope.</p> <p>I also find concerning that Virginia law does NOT disallow sexually explicit materials in schools, as long as there is a process for making parents aware of the content and providing alternative means of study if needed. Virginia law applies to instructional materials, but not supplementary materials, which are generally an investment in broadening a student's experience and complement but does not necessarily directly influence instructional goals. RCPS's definition of "sexually explicit" therefore expands state law in a way that I find to be an overreach of the school board's powers because it does not allow for discussion of mature themes in classrooms where the study of history or literature including these themes may be required (for example, in an AP class), or for a deepening of intellectual experience outside of those classroom experiences and instead lumps all supplementary materials in with instructional materials. These two buckets of materials have different goals and should have different evaluation criteria, as well as ways to opt in or out of the leveraging of those materials by students whose families find content to be too explicit for their child. I will also point out here that if the board chooses to apply the same standard definition of sexually explicit to all types of materials, supplementary or not, the application must be universal and fair - there can no protection or reservation on the behalf of religions materials if those materials have content that falls under the definition of sexually explicit.</p> | <p>- "Parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." I believe that my rights to guide what my children read, hear, and view is already a right that I exercise daily. However, I would never dare to govern the content other parents deem appropriate or inappropriate. The idea that the board has been driven to contract access to specific texts infuriates me, because I want my children to be prepared for the real world that awaits them. All families are not created capable of supporting this kind of preparation, exposure to diverse perspectives, and collection of resources that allow for intellectual expansion. Many students and families do rely on schools for that purpose. So the passing off of responsibility to families is fine if a family has the means and the will, but so many of our families in RCPS do not. Telling our families that books can be removed "but you can go find them at your local library or bookstore" throws a barrier up that not all families can surpass, so I find that very idea to epitomize the Supreme Court's ruling that "separate but equal is inherently unequal". RCPS would set up students in Rockingham County to be less competitive than students matriculating in other districts, like Fairfax County schools.</p> <p>- Authority - When speaking specifically of supplementary materials in a library, literature to be used in a classroom, music, theater, etc., the idea that you can deem who has authority and who does not is limiting and I would not include that as a requirement. All humans are allowed to create. While we do not have the obligation to consume, I think this requirement indicates that the board could deem Shakespeare 'not of sufficient authority' to study.</p> <p>- "Currency and relevance to the educational curriculum and instructional materials" Again, I feel that library and classroom library collections are not necessarily intended to tie directly to curriculum, but to expand beyond. Additionally, I find those materials to be an opportunity to hear varied and diverse voices, and it is especially important that students who are underrepresented for any number of reasons - including but not limited to sexual orientation and gender - should be able to find works and material that reflect their experiences and realities.</p> <p>- Again, the incorporation of the definition of "sexually explicit" is extremely limiting and I strenuously object. I think there needs to be a higher bar of what is considered explicit (and of course it should account for age appropriateness, etc.). I also think it is ridiculous to police high school student consumption of materials that include explicit scenes when a) the internet exists and b) these stories are not focused on sex, but sex is woven into the story to further the relationships of the characters - love isn't seedy and inappropriate, and kids need examples of positive relationship models.</p> <p>- "Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection." These materials are</p> | <p>- Again I find the definition of "sexually explicit" to be too narrow. It does not allow for context, but is a binary choice that I find offensive. Context matters, and I would much rather ask that the board includes context as a point of consideration in materials evaluation and challenge.</p> <p>- I do not agree with the board having the final say after parents, teachers and other school staff and the CRC has made a recommendation regarding sexually explicit materials. Partly because of the aforementioned issue with the definition of sexually explicit, but also because the board has already telegraphed its willingness to act arbitrarily and in opposition to public opinion. This process allows the board's personal views to be unilaterally imposed on students and their families, and allows them to disregard a process the CRC put time and energy into, and makes the entire process disingenuous. The board is there to guide and protect thoughtfully, not 'at will'. I realize there are media, voices, and mature subjects that make board members personally uncomfortable, but there may be good reasons for that media to be incorporated to a curriculum or supplemental stack. I would urge the board to consider the difference between protection and censorship.</p> <p>- There is also little information about how the public community members and parents will be selected, which does not instill confidence that these voices will be representative of the multi-faceted views of our district. This should be addressed and transparent.</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I disagree with the revisions to the current School Board Policy. | I disagree with the revisions to the current School Board Policy. | I disagree with the revisions to the current School Board Policy. |
| Parent/Guardian | I do not agree or support the revisions | I do not agree or support this policy | I do not agree with this policy. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I do not agree with the changes | I do not agree with the changes | I do not agree with the changes |
| Parent/Guardian | I do not agree with these revisions. I think that librarians have been educated and certified as media specialists. I don't think they need this type of policing from "non-experts". My childrens' librarians from elementary to middle school to high school have been fantastic resources and mentors. | I disagree with this policy. I think that librarians have been educated and certified as media specialists. I don't think they need this type of policing from "non-experts". My childrens' librarians from elementary to middle school to high school have been fantastic resources and mentors. I'm grateful that my older son has now graduated out of RCPS and my current high schooler is at MRGS where he takes English. Thankfully, that school does not have uneducated school board members making decisions for educators. This is shameful. | I think this new process is completely unnecessary and a total smokescreen for religious agenda in our public schools. There was already a process in place that next to no parent utilized. By the books listed on the banned/removal list, it is very clear that "sexually explicit" really is referring to LGBTQ material. This school board is targetting an already marginalized population. Again, just shameful. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I do not agree with this policy as drafted. This did not take into account any of the advice given by our librarians. This draft policy is borrowing from other highly restrictive policies in the nation rather than addressing Rockingham county's specific situation. This draft policy gives the school board too much power and does not allow for parental input. This draft policy goes against Gov. Youngkins recent stance on sexually explicit material. This draft policy is taking points out of context rather than considering the value of the work as a whole. I repeat: I do not agree with this draft policy | I do not agree with this policy as drafted. This did not take into account any of the advice given by our librarians. This draft policy is borrowing from other highly restrictive policies in the nation rather than addressing Rockingham county's specific situation. This draft policy gives the school board too much power and does not allow for parental input. This draft policy goes against Gov. Youngkins recent stance on sexually explicit material. This draft policy is taking points out of context rather than considering the value of the work as a whole. I repeat: I do not agree with this draft policy | I do not agree with this policy as drafted. This did not take into account any of the advice given by our librarians. This draft policy is borrowing from other highly restrictive policies in the nation rather than addressing Rockingham county's specific situation. This draft policy gives the school board too much power and does not allow for parental input. This draft policy goes against Gov. Youngkins recent stance on sexually explicit material. This draft policy is taking points out of context rather than considering the value of the work as a whole. I repeat: I do not agree with this draft policy |
| Parent/Guardian | I do not believe this revision to be in the best interest of all students. Please stop banning books. We need to get rid of Matt cross. | Do not go through with this. | No. This will not be good for students. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I do not see that this new policy enhances in any way the previous policy, when we trusted the teachers and librarians to do the job they were hired to do. These changes are too important to be hiding, and something like this should have been published in the DN-R for citizen review | I do not see that this new policy enhances in any way the previous policy, when we trusted the teachers and librarians to do the job they were hired to do. I find the wording of the policy vague, and difficult to understand. It appears that enforcement could be anything the enforcing body wants it to be, due to the lack of clarity in the language. Various key words definitions are murky at best. As a Rockingham County taxpayer, I find this entire exercise unnecessary, a terrible use of my taxpayer dollars, and a misguided effort to second guess the professional educators we pay to do a job. These changes are too important to be hiding, and something like this should have been published in the DN-R for citizen review. | Without access to the previous complaint forms and policies, it is not possible to provide an intelligent response to this. Additionally, a longer period of time for review and better notification to the residents of the county would have been preferable. These changes are too important to be hiding, and something like this should have been published in the DN-R for citizen review. |
| Parent/Guardian | I do not support this | I do not support this | I do not support this |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I do not support this policy based on the reasons below. | I'm concerned that this policy will dumb down my children's education. I have to imagine that this policy will drive educators to avoid important classic and modern works, driven by fear of how some art or literature may be construed by others rather than embrace a challenging learning moment for the merit of what that art or literature may bring to my children's education in the future. This isn't going to protect my child in any meaningful way, rather it is just going to put more work on the already-busy educators we're lucky to have here in Rockingham County. | This feels like useless bureaucracy that addresses a problem that does not exist. How long until someone complains about scenes in the Bible, or perhaps our state seal? How much of the educator's already busy day will be taken up with the management of this new paperwork system? Let's trust the judgement of our librarians and teachers and not drown teachers, parents and administrators in kafkaesque systems. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I do NOT support this policy. | I do NOT support this policy. | There was already a policy in place to challenge books. There have been committees previously formed to read and discuss if a book should be banned. Books have already been previously challenged through previous policies. I am aware of books that were challenged, the committees that formed as well as the policies to review. To say these policies don't/ didn't exist is a total attempt to misinform, deceive and lie to County residents. |
| Parent/Guardian | I do not think that book should be banned from access | I do not think that books should be a limited resource to our kids | I think that books should go through a carefully reviewed process before being outright removed |
| Parent/Guardian | I don't agree with censoring books for everyone. If a parent does not want their child to read certain books that's fine but don't set your standards and expectations for everyone. Deal with it in your own home. | I don't agree with censoring books for everyone. If a parent does not want their child to read certain books that's fine but don't set your standards and expectations for everyone. Deal with it in your own home. | I don't agree with censoring books for everyone. If a parent does not want their child to read certain books that's fine but don't set your standards and expectations for everyone. Deal with it in your own home. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I don't believe these revisions are necessary. The existing policies are adequate and allow room for the acquisition and teaching of some works of classic literature that this revision may outright bar. Relating this section of VA code pertaining to state workers to introducing students to pieces of literature with artistic merit and value is an act that is detrimental to the broad education of older students. Librarians and teachers are highly trained in their vocations and tasks: they know what is age-appropriate and helpful for their students. We should trust that they have had the best interests of their students in mind and allow them to continue as they have been. | Again, I don't believe these revisions are necessary, and my comments from above apply here as well. I am afraid that the use of "sexually explicit content" here will be used to justify the removal of materials that may represent our diverse LGBTQ students and neighbors, because some people see LGBTQ themes as inherently sexual while heterosexual content is not. All students deserve to see themselves reflected in the pages of the books they read. Additionally, as a librarian myself (I am not speaking on behalf of my employer, but as an individual with a Master's in Library and Information Sciences degree and 18 years of experience in library work), I am concerned with the use of the word "deselect" which obscures the true intent: to enact a blanket ban on certain titles from Rockingham Schools. | In addition to the required review of all materials as noted in the second policy for sexually explicit content, this policy creates more work for staff. The end result is that time is diverted away from students' every day needs. As a librarian, all of the reconsideration policies I have utilized in the past require the committee to actually read the entire challenged title, not just "review" it. I believe that wording needs to change to ensure that care and attention is brought to the entire process and that works are looked at as a whole - not just for brief sections. I think having two complaint pathways is redundant: if sexual content is an issue, it can be addressed through a standard complaint. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I don't think the school board should be making the final decision on challenged books. These decisions should be made at the local school level and not be micromanaged by the school board. The school board should be focused on more important issues. I suggest the school board scrap this draft and give serious consideration to the county librarian proposal. | See above | See above |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I feel like this policy will limit the teaching of family life education. "Sexually explicit " materials stated in the definition of the laws sites can even be used to describe diagrams, and material pertaining to the purpose of explaining how the human body works Public schools are responsible for educating students to enter the workforce upon graduation. Restricting the access to education regarding human reproductive health is detrimental for students who do not receive this information at home. This is why public schools teach students about human reproduction and how to prevent the conception of humans. This includes STI prevention, and about contraceptive use.</p> | <p>I do not feel like the school board needs to be involved in the final decision on whether something is appropriate for school use. I feel as though our principals, teachers, librarians, and anyone else who has a degree in the education of children can make that decision based on their professional qualifications and experience. School board officials may or may not have the education to make an informed decision. School personnel go through years of college to gain the knowledge needed to make these decisions for what is appropriate for the development of students.</p> | <p>I do not understand why we would let an elected official make any decision about learning curriculum in schools. Especially when they may or may not have the educational background and experience required to make an informed decision. I feel that our school personnel is very capable of making informed decisions based on use, and content of supplemental materials that are appropriate for students in RCPS.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I feel that if any of the books has anything to do with gender and sexuality remove it. If it has anything to do with sex in general it needs to be removed.</p> | <p>Agree with it.</p> | <p>Agree, my child should not be learning about sexuality or being made to say her sexuality to anyone other than their parents; therefore, I feel that none of this should be in the school. It can be taught at home under supervision of parent(s).</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I find it interesting that you don't provide a link to the VA code defining sexually explicit content. I was left to research that myself which I'm sure not many will do- I suppose that is what you are wanting. The definition is extremely broad and so much could be read into it that so many books could be included. In reading this policy, I also wonder what you mean by "certain workbooks"? This is extremely unclear.</p> | <p>I don't feel that your new policy will "Empower ALL learners" as you pick and choose what is okay for everyone. Learners are different, backgrounds are different, experiences are different. Students learn to think critically by reading a wide variety of literature so they can learn from those that are different than them or who have had different life experiences. No one wants pure pornography in our schools but that is not what I'm seeing in the list of books you have banned. I've begun to read them and would have absolutely no problem with one of my children reading All American Boys, Beloved, The Invisible Boy or The Kite Runner (I list these as they are the ones I have actually read). I'm currently reading The Art of Racing in the Rain and listening to The Bluest Eye but can't speak to those yet as I haven't finished them. You are disregarding context which I see as a huge issue. Context does matter. Actually reading the books would have been a good idea before compiling this list.</p> | <p>I think you need to include a spot asking if the complainant has actually read the book in its entirety. This should be a requirement to lodge a complaint. Context does matter, so reading the entire book is important. There has been a process in place for years and few complaints have ever been lodged from my understanding. My 5 children attended Rockingham County Public Schools from 1999-2019. In those 20 years, I never felt like the librarians were providing inappropriate content to my children. I was even asked to read some books over the years for Book Finder. I am certainly relieved my children are finished with Rockingham County Public Schools with the current environment being what it is. The improvements I see as needing to be addressed currently in the schools aren't the ones that seem to be of high importance to this board.</p> |

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| <p>Staff member</p> | <p>I find the definition of supplemental materials to be confusing. It references materials to supplement basal materials. I understand basal materials to be a language arts (reading) basal curriculum adopted by the county. However, the exemplar items listed as supplemental encompass more than language arts. Is this policy about library and classroom library books or more than that? We can probably remove film strips from the list.</p> | <p>"Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection." This is a burdensome and time-consuming expectation. Are you expecting us to keep a record of every game, poster, book, magazine article, etc purchased and submit it for review? Either you trust teachers to exercise appropriate judgement within our areas of expertise or you don't. In the case of the school library, the online catalog is already publicly available through the website. There doesn't need to be a second list.</p> | <p>The proposed guidelines for establishing a CRC and committee (at the school level) to review challenged materials should have equal representation between teachers and parents. (" the principal shall convene and chair a committee including two (2) licensed faculty members and three (3) parents, guardians, or community members to review the supplementary material in question. " The CRC shall include seven (7) members, including: (i) a school librarian or teacher; (ii) an Assistant Superintendent; (iii) the Supervisor of Media Services; (iv) a member of the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee; and (v) three (3) parents, guardians, or other community members.) While parents are certainly experts on their specific child, they are not experts in curriculum, instruction, child development, or the composition of a specific community as teachers are. By including more parents than teachers on these groups, the board is sending a message that you do not trust or value the expertise and experience of your teachers. I do not classify superintendents, administrators, or central office employees in the same category as teachers.</p> <p>I couldn't find in the policy where the complainant and reviewers are directed to read the challenged material in its entirety. Prior to removing materials, vested parties should read the material in its entirety in order to make a fully informed decisions. Words or excerpts can be objectionable at face value when taken out of context, but can serve a larger purpose or goal when examined within the full text. For example, a poor decision can cause a character to learn and grow from their mistakes.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I fully support the proposed revisions and recommend adoption immediately. This is long overdue. Kudos to all that worked on this.</p> | <p>I fully support this draft policy and recommend adoption immediately.</p> | <p>Many thanks to all that have made this possible. Not everything that is in print should be available to all RCPS students in their libraries of classrooms. The proposed revision and new draft policy pass are reasonable solutions to what we should and should not have in our schools.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I fully support the revisions of the school board policy IIAB -supplementary materials. I want to see the policies revisions made by our current school board fully implemented!</p> | <p>I fully support the draft of school board policy IIABA supplementary material selection and want to see these policies fully implemented!</p> | <p>I fully support the draft of school board policy IIABB - complaint about supplementary materials/challenged supplementary materials. I support the current school board and their decisions to make these changes and I want to see their policies fully implemented!</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I fully support these revisions.</p> | <p>I fully support the proposed draft.</p> | <p>I fully support the draft policy. As a former teacher in RCPS (22 years), I was appalled to learn of some of the sexually graphic and obscene books in our libraries. I can not believe these books were available to my own children to check out while they attended public school. I had no knowledge before this year, and I applaud the board for taking on this issue to protect the innocence of today's youth. Thank you for raising awareness to fellow parents.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I have always trusted the school staff and librarians to determine what reading material is best for my child and I am the final say. That is the way it always has been and I was always comfortable with it.</p> | <p>unnecessary to make changes</p> | <p>If my child is reading, I am happy. If they ride the bus I can guarantee they have heard worse than anything in this list of books. If they have a phone, they have access to any of it and you have just given them a reading list of all the complained about books.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I have concerns about this draft on both a process and policy level. The process has not been open and engaged to the community, particularly parents. The school board has not followed its own statements to have open hearing and processes that involve parents and the entire Rockingham County community. This survey is also evidence of the lack of soliciting public input. The survey is difficult to find, has a short deadline and is poorly constructed. All draft policies listed in the survey and proposed by the board should not be adopted until more transparency and public input is offered.</p> <p>On a policy level the draft policy does not address literature as a whole but focuses on specific lines in a body of work. This directly contradicts the 1973 Supreme Court Miller Test guidelines for determining obscenity. They are: 1. whether the average person applying contemporary community standards would find the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; 2. whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and 3 whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. The court specifically determines that the complaint must be taken as an entire body of work. This must be included in the draft policy.</p> <p>On a more practical level this draft policy would handicap our Rockingham County students post-graduation. A primary purpose of public education is to prepare students for the world they will live in. This includes being exposed to the difficult issues of the day and providing them the guidance on how to better understand and address these issues. Also, the policy and the school board are specifically targeting minority students and creating a dangerous and unsafe learning environment for them.</p> <p>Finally, none of the questions in the survey address the 50 plus books that have already been removed for the RCPS collection. No action should be taken until a more comprehensive plan is developed on how to address this action and further book removal.</p> | <p>This policy should not be adopted until more opportunities for public and parental comments are afforded. This should address the issues I raised in question # 1. Additionally, the section requiring teachers to report all supplemental materials to the school board is an attack on teacher's professionalism and will create a toxic work environment.</p> | <p>Again, this should not be adopted until more transparency and public input. The policy needs to reflect the input from all members of the RCPS community.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I have many grievances regarding the way this process started, but regardless, we are here now and I want my voice heard. As a parent of a gay child, access to books that represented his relationships, his struggles and his successes was instrumentally important in his mental health. Just as cisgendered children are surrounded by many representations of relationships, both romantic and platonic- gay and trans kids need and deserve to see themselves, too. Public education must embrace all, not merely tolerate anyone that doesn't pray, dress, or have sex in a way that fits this board's personal and religious beliefs.</p> <p>You ran on the premise that parents had the right to choose what was appropriate for their child, while in the space of a public education model. The revisions and drafts you have proposed have taken away my parental rights, which is unacceptable. We currently have a system in place to allow all parents to limit access of what your child can check out in all school libraries. It is difficult to understand why that was not sufficient.</p> <p>There are so few examples of any requests made from parents, but I am sure you researched that when exploring this issue, right? Under the current process, you can take care of your child and I can take care of mine. Without firsthand knowledge of parenting a gay teen, you cannot possibly assume you know what is best. What you are proposing is stepping way out of the boundaries of a board that should be guiding, not dictating, a large country with countless professions. These professions KNOW the damage this book ban will cause on our youth. It is just pure ignorance to stand in front of our teachers, our parents and claim you know the repercussions of your actions. What you have is an opinion. What our librarians, teachers, therapists and administrators have is knowledge based in fact and derived from many, many, many years of education, hard work and experience. Until you have put the same amount of time and effort into understanding the entirety of child development, then again, all you have in an opinion.</p> | <p>see above</p> | <p>see above</p> |

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| <p>Administrator, Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I have no comment</p> | <p>I fear that given the "Notification of Recently Selected Materials Section" will discourage teachers from maintaining and/or updating supplemental materials (classroom libraries, etc) in their classrooms for students. Having to submit the list and resubmit each time they add something is a significant undertaking. Multiple teachers have commented that this will be a significant stressor but also that they are afraid to offer feedback on the policy as they fear being viewed by the board as noncompliant or difficult. Our best teachers are constantly adding read alouds and high interest books for students - adding this process to do so may discourage them from doing so.</p> | <p>I have no comment</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I have no feedback</p> | <p>I feel that if parents (as a parent) are concerned with the books that are in my classroom library they are more than welcome to visit my classroom and peruse my bookshelves. It would be a waste of time to catalog my library when I could spend it on creating quality lesson plans to teach their students.</p> | <p>I feel parents should be required to read the book before they submit a complaint or request.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I have put a lot of trust in my child's teachers as she has attended RCPS schools from pre K to her senior year. The message you are sending to parents now is that teachers and librarians can't be trusted to make the right decisions for all of the students at their schools.</p> | <p>As a parent, I have the final say in what my child reads. I know what is on her TBR list, I know what she has recently read and her thoughts on that book, and I trust her to choose materials that she and I will be comfortable with her reading.</p> <p>There have been a few occasions when I asked her to hold off on reading a book either because I wanted her to be a little older before reading about a particular subject or because I wanted to read it with her. We have the same conversations about movies, tv shows, cell phone apps, etc. This is my job as her parent.</p> <p>I have worked multiple jobs throughout the majority of her life. There are many weeks I don't have time to get through all of the household chores, let alone take her to the library to pick up a book that we didn't have money to buy. The school library has been instrumental to her success as a student and as a human being. She is considered one of the academically elite at her high school, she is kind to others, she is respectful toward others, she doesn't curse, and she doesn't make decisions that I wouldn't be proud of.</p> <p>I owe so much of who my daughter has grown up to be to books. They've helped me view the world through a more well-rounded and empathetic lens, and, in turn, I have been able to raise my daughter with that influence in addition to the understanding she has gained from the pages of the books that she has read.</p> <p>Your policies are destroying access to books for so many children in our county, and in turn, you are ripping away from them the opportunity to grow as human beings and to become successful and productive citizens.</p> | <p>These should be an all in one form. Please refer to ALA and AASL policies aand procedures.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I have raised 3 children who have attended who are productive members of society. They all attended RCPS. My daughter received a master's degree in Education Administration. My oldest son is in the National Guard, a Young Life leader at a RCPS high school and will be attending the Police Academy and a job with the Harrisonburg Police Department. My youngest son is a senior at TAHS and Massanutten Regional Governors School. He is currently Number One in his class. You don't recognize Valedictorian although that is what he is. He accepted an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy. I raised my kids to make decisions and I as a parent will help them learn from mistakes. I don't need you as a School Board to dictate to me how to do that. I do not support the book ban policy. Let me parent!!!!</p> | <p>I have raised 3 children who have attended who are productive members of society. They all attended RCPS. My daughter received a master's degree in Education Administration. My oldest son is in the National Guard, a Young Life leader at a RCPS high school and will be attending the Police Academy and a job with the Harrisonburg Police Department. My youngest son is a senior at TAHS and Massanutten Regional Governors School. He is currently Number One in his class. You don't recognize Valedictorian although that is what he is. He accepted an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy. I raised my kids to make decisions and I as a parent will help them learn from mistakes. I don't need you as a School Board to dictate to me how to do that. I do not support the book ban policy. Let me parent!!!!</p> | <p>I have raised 3 children who have attended who are productive members of society. They all attended RCPS. My daughter received a master's degree in Education Administration. My oldest son is in the National Guard, a Young Life leader at a RCPS high school and will be attending the Police Academy and a job with the Harrisonburg Police Department. My youngest son is a senior at TAHS and Massanutten Regional Governors School. He is currently Number One in his class. You don't recognize Valedictorian although that is what he is. He accepted an appointment to the United States Coast Guard Academy. I raised my kids to make decisions and I as a parent will help them learn from mistakes. I don't need you as a School Board to dictate to me how to do that. I do not support the book ban policy. Let me parent!!!!</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I have spent 28 years in Rockingham County Public Schools. Thirteen of those years as a student and fifteen as a teacher. I plan on staying in RCPS until the day I retire. I am however, extremely concerned about this proposed policy. In a 2023 survey conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress only 14% of high school students said that they read for fun. For the past few years, it has been very rare for a student to pull out a book and read when they have finished their work. This year, however, I have so many readers. These students are top-tier academically and behaviorally. As a reader myself, I often have conversations with students about the books they read. I am deeply concerned with this policy as a whole, because as currently proposed, and depending on how these definitions are interpreted, you will be removing hundreds, if not thousands, of books from RCPS shelves. Many proponents of this policy state that students who want to read these so-called inappropriate books can do so by going to a bookstore, ordering books on Amazon, or checking them out from the local public library. It's important to realize that not every student can afford to buy books and not every student has transportation to a public library. In order to remove a book from the library, those doing the removal should have to personally read that book--not simply find a list online. As we have seen, several of the books that were "temporarily removed" earlier this year are not and have not ever been in Rockingham County Public Schools. Several of these removed books are required knowledge for our Scholastic Bowl team. It is hard to coach a team to compete when I am unable to have the books available to them. Programs on Edgenuity and AP courses also include some of these books that have been removed. Rather than taking books away from ALL students, could we look into allowing parents to see on PowerSchool the books their students are checking out? Parents who are concerned about the books their students are reading should be invested enough in raising their children that they look into the materials their students choose to check out. If the ultimate concern is protecting students from sexually explicit materials, I can assure you that they are finding those materials on their phones and Chromebooks via TikTok, the movies and tv shows they are streaming, and the websites they are visiting. Additionally, these students are not disrespecting teachers and using profane language due to the books they are reading.</p> <p>In the grand scheme of everything, this policy is incredibly vague and could be left up to many interpretations even using the definition of "Sexually explicit content" as defined in Virginia Code § 2.2-2827 and School Board Policy IIA.</p> | <p>Teachers and librarians shall not KNOWINGLY acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplementary material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content.</p> <p>If this is where we are going, KNOWINGLY needs to be added to this part of the policy.</p> | <p>All complaints against books should be made public. The name(s) of the person filing the complaint can be redacted for their privacy, but everyone should have a right to see the books that are being challenged and the reasons why they are being challenged.</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian | I leave ur bible alone....you leave my kids books alone | I do not agree | I do not agree |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I like that policy specifically lists multiple sources as supplemental materials. | My concern is that teachers will not encourage reading/teaching from printed materials to avoid any potential conflict with this policy. Instead, teachers will use mainly videos or other technology as supplemental materials, which parents will never see. Students learn best by reading and writing on paper. I am extremely concerned that teachers will steer clear of books. Could we consider having more detail to cover the area screen use as it relates to this policy? | I do have concerns requiring parents to fill out a "complaint form" . Could it be called something else that sounds positive? I feel that there are many parents who might not want to complain to their child's administrator, so they will choose to stay silent, even if they have a valid concern. |
| Parent/Guardian | I like that the schools have control of what is in the classrooms/library. However the lack of consistency across the county is concerning. | Having teachers submit a list "regularly" adds more to our teachers workload, which is already stretched past its max. Continual polices and procedures like this will add to the teacher shortage. Which will then lead to larger classes. Then our children's education will suffer. | If the school board approves this, Rockingham County students education will drop because of a few who feel like their viewpoint is more important than others. This is not inclusive to all, only some in the county. This will make many teachers in the county leave, exasperating the fine line of the teacher shortage the county currently has. If a parent does not like something being taught, then they have the right to remove the child from Rockingham County and go elsewhere. School should be a safe place for students to freely and safely express themselves. With policies like this, they are not able to because a parent decided they do not like what is being taught and telling those marginalized students they are not as worthy as others. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I object to this policy because it doesn't require evaluation of books in its entirety. Context, purpose | Sexual content in itself does not constitute or mean pornography. | Evaluation of all materials should be completed by trained professional teachers and librarian who have knowledge and experience to determine age appropriate materials for instruction....NOT the school board!! |
| Rockingham County Resident | I object to this policy which does not require evaluation of books in their entirety. | Evaluation of books in their entirety should be required. | Add require that all books should be read in their entirety by all parties involved in selection / "deselection" of books. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I object to what amounts to a total power of veto as written in the final sentence of paragraph 2. We are to believe that the members of the school board are the sole determiners of what is "sexually explicit" material. Based on recent history, we can be sure that very little thought, research, and professional expertise will be brought bear in the decision. | The credibility of the school board is undermined once again as this entire new policy statement comes down to the judgement of the school board being trusted to outweigh the expertise of professional teachers and librarians who have established their careers in establishing their credentials. The school board has set themselves up as judge and jury with the power to veto the judgement of professionals who are solely dedicated to betterment of students through education. | In item 6, once again it is the school board that will give itself the final veto power after all procedures have been followed. Will the school board challenge the complainants if they go against recommendations of the school librarians? Will the school board allow librarians, English teachers, reading specialists, and history teachers to do their jobs without this sword of Damocles hanging above their heads? How can this be encouraging to public education? How does this help students? Where is the respect for the professional educators that have been entrusted the great responsibility of teaching our students? |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I oppose the revisions for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why not use the same definition of "Sexually Explicit Content" as Section IIA Instructional Materials of the Policy Manual for continuity in the system? I believe one reason the Board does not want to do so is because of the last sentence, "Instructional materials shall not be designated as sexually explicit based solely on the sexual orientation of the characters therein." 2. The scope of this full ban is way too broad. Such content should be placed in context and the material should be as a whole. By way of an example, arguably the Bible has sexually explicit content but we view it in the context of the message the Bible delivers to the reader and, based upon putting it in context and considering the document as a whole, we find the document has great value. The same treatment should be given to any material that can further enrich the education of our students. 3. I take great offense as a parent that during the last school board meeting the Superintendent and Chair of the school board stated they did not want to hear from anyone outside of the county on the proposed policy. Shame on you to think that you are so knowledgeable on this matter that you could not benefit from the knowledge of others, especially when your job is essentially about knowledge. There are endless studies, conducted by those who have studied and truly understand primary education, that show the benefits of making difficult subjects available to students through their education system. Doing so provides them with a safe and structured way to learn about those subjects, thus better equipping them for life post-graduation, when they likely will confront some of these difficult subjects in their own lives. Having the knowledge to navigate them is invaluable. For individuals who profess to want to do what is best for your students, you are missing the target. 4. If you are not willing to take guidance from "outside the county" (which again is mind boggling), then you should at least listen to the very individuals you employ, the teachers and librarians. The individuals who have studied, trained, and dedicated their lives to the education of the county's students. They do not support this policy and you continue to ignore that fact. Furthermore, you are taking away their ability to exercise, in the words of the current IIAB language, "a high degree of professional judgment". The reality is the staff employed by the school system know how to properly address these topics and assess what is best for the students. Trust the process that already exists. If you do not, then quite frankly you should look elsewhere for your child's education. Don't make the rest of the children suffer due to your insecurities about the individuals who teach our children. Additionally, it is funny you say you do not want to hear from anyone outside of the county when the initial list that started us down this dangerous road was from a website for a group that did not originate in our county and the very policy you propose is based upon that of another jurisdiction, not the actual wishes of the residents of Rockingham County. 5. While some on the school board have openly stated | <p>I oppose the draft for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All of the language before the actual criteria are just lofty words that you use to hide behind this ill-conceived proposed policy. The reality is that your actions are completely politically motivated and in no way undertaken to create a "caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity", "aids students in research and study", promotes "critical reasoning skills", addresses a "wide range of ability levels", and supports "leisure reading among students". 2. Deselect is an elegant word that is being used to sanitize what is really happening. Call it what it is. The school board is banning books and other materials. 3. Requiring teachers and librarians to not only submit such materials to the school board but also provide lists of any materials acquired for the classroom libraries or school library is a direct affront to the professionalism of these individuals. This is the worst type of self-reporting. It will create a toxic and potentially dangerous work environment for these individuals. Seeing as there are members of the board who have had no problem directly calling out teachers and placing them in danger already, one is led to believe this will be used against teachers in the future and to their detriment. Based upon the communications from the school system to staff, it is clear that teachers are already thinking about leaving due to the unrealistic demands of their job (which have nothing to do with the actual education of children). This proposed policy will only continue to encourage teachers to leave, thus ruining our county schools. One wonders if that is not the goal of this school board. 4. This policy has been touted as a way to protect parents' rights but be honest in the fact it "protects" the rights of a certain demographic of the county. I, and many others, do not wish for items to be banned from schools, so how does this protect my rights to parent? For individuals who do not want a government body to dictate the way you or your children live, isn't that what you are doing to all of us who oppose such measures? Why do you get to decide what is best for my child? Shouldn't I, a fit and able parent, be able to make that decision? The current system in place allows parents to address concerns for their children and limit their ability to access items they find inappropriate. Isn't that enough? I believe it is. These items do not need to be taken away from all students and such decisions should be specific to families with concerns. I do not have concerns. Leave my children out of this. | <p>I oppose the draft policy for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A system should be established where parents can address their specific concerns for their specific students. As such, there should not be a blanket approach for either complaint process. If I, as a parent of a student, do not share the same concerns about materials that are reviewed under either process, then why should the board dictate my parental decisions? The entirety of this proposal was put forth as a measure to allow parents to make decisions! 2. Stating things should be "age-appropriate" is extremely subjective. Students are all at different reading and maturity levels. What one 15-year-old can handle is likely different from another 15-year-old. Blanket or one-size approaches do not address this very fact. 3. The review committees for both complaint processes include too few professional educators, which diminishes the role of experts in this process. This school system employs professionals who are trained in how to educate students. These decisions should be led, guided, and made by those very professionals! 4. The fact the school board has the ultimate and final decision-making authority is mind-boggling. First, the school board, as compared to the actual professionals who educate our children, is not best suited to make the final decision on this matter. Second, the board continues to tout that they are putting the decision in the hands of parents, but they are not! The school board is directly taking the decision out of my hands as a parent! I do not approve of this process nor do I wish to see books and other materials banned. I trust my own parental judgment and the guidance of professional educators. I fail to understand how the school board can make this decision for me and my children that the board is supposed to serve. 5. There is no requirement in the proposed policy for those involved in opining on the materials or ultimately making the decision whether or not to ban the materials to actually read the materials in full. Again, for both complaint processes, actually reading and viewing the materials in full is so important. How can anyone properly assess material if you are not required to view and/or read the entire thing?! 6. There is no requirement to consider the material as a whole or to consider the context or merit of the material. This is also terribly dangerous. Anything can be taken out of context and viewed as malicious or harmful if considered in a vacuum or without the proper perspective. All materials must be considered in context and in their entirety to make informed and rational decisions concerning their educational value. There are so many items of great value to the development of our students that could, arguably, be found offensive for one reason or another when taken out of context. Again, I point to the Bible. It is important to consider materials as a whole and look at what they offer the student. I raise this as a concern for both complaint processes. 7. Quite honestly, the Supplementary Materials Complaint Procedure scares me more than anything. The fact a complaint could be filed for any reason and ultimately lead to the item being "deselected" (again, be |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I oppose these proposed policies for the following reasons :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The legal reference used for definition of “sexually explicit,” Va Code §2.2-2827 is based on what state employees are not allowed to access on a government computer. This standard has no relationship to literature. A more appropriate definition is VA Code § 18.2-390. This part of the code deals specifically with what is illegal to sell or loan to juveniles. 6) "Harmful to juveniles" means that quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse, when it (a) predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of juveniles, (b) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles, and (c) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for juveniles. - The blanket prohibition on any sexually explicit content does not consider context or purpose of the work as a whole, as is required by the obscenity test established in Miller v. California (see: https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity) - SB656, also known as the parental notification law, states that “The bill states that the provisions of the bill shall not be construed as requiring or providing for the censoring of books in public elementary and secondary schools.” Governor Youngkin affirmed this in his veto letter of SB 235 “Current law unequivocally affirms that the adoption of these model policies by a school board should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools. Therefore, the bill is unnecessary.” https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Vetoes-(1).pdf - The process for developing these policies has lacked transparency. 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One week to review results and change proposed policies based on community input is insufficient, and lends itself to the impression that the Board has no intention of truly using the input given. | <p>I oppose these proposed policies for the following reasons :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limiting access to a wide variety of materials using a narrow definition of sexually explicit content actually negates the rights of many parents who may choose to allow their children to read freely according to their own family values. - The selection goals are negated by a blanket prohibition on sexually explicit content. These policies contradict these goals : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Creating a caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity within our community and beyond. (Limiting the variety of viewpoints in available books does not recognize the diversity of experiences and backgrounds of Rockingham students) 2) Providing a balanced collection reflecting various points of view. (Only one point of view represented) 3) Aiding students in research and study; (information is limited) 4) Promoting critical thinking skills: (students do not have access to literature about a variety of topics because of the amount of literature that is discarded simply because of sexually explicit content in the story, without regard to context.) 5) Providing materials on a wide range of ability levels, chosen to reflect the various student populations; (only one viewpoint will be represented here) eg. A student who is a victim of sexual assault will not be able to read Laurie Halse ANseron’s award winning Speak , in which a survivor learns to find her voice. 6) Supporting leisure reading among students. 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Which is already toxic enough. - “Supplementary materials shall be considered for their educational suitability and shall not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.” The prohibition on sexually explicit content regardless of context is actually both partisan and doctrinal disapproval. |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I read through the material, but don't know how this is different from the policy we had. If would be nice to just see the revisions.</p> | <p>I read through the material, but don't know how this is different from the policy we had. If would be nice to just see the revisions.</p> | <p>I read through the material, but don't know how this is different from the policy we had. If would be nice to just see the revisions.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I strongly disagree with these proposed policies.</p> | <p>Librarians do an amazing job, and students deserve a broad selection of books to choose from. Parents may choose for their children not to check out particular books. This is a fancy way of banning books.</p> | <p>If you must, add library books and materials to the challenge process that is already in place.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I strongly object to policy IIAB and feel that it is not necessary.</p> | <p>I strongly object to policy IIAB and feel that it is not necessary.</p> | <p>As a Rockingham County resident who raised my children in county schools, I strongly object to Policy IIABB, particularly its inclusion of a procedure to challenge books that do not contain sexually explicit material. That procedure seems designed to allow community members to challenge any books with LGBTQ, racial, atheist, or women's empowerment themes because they are politically opposed to them, not because they are actually dangerous to students. The procedure also is cloaked in secrecy. Here are my specific questions about draft policy IIABB:</p> <p>(1)The draft policy says that the CRC will include three parents, guardians, or other community members who will be appointed by the Superintendent. What are the criteria for their selection? Will their names be made public so that we will know who is making decisions about students' reading material?</p> <p>(2)Why are "other community members" who do not have students in RCPS allowed to serve on the CRC? How will the board ensure that there is not a stacked deck of individuals with a particular political viewpoint?</p> <p>(3)The draft policy says that the review process begins when a parent or guardian fills out the Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Form. Can a student submit a complaint form?</p> <p>(4)Is the CRC required to review every challenged book? If not, what will be the criteria for deciding when not to review a book?</p> <p>(5)The draft policy says the CRC will prepare a written report on their review of any challenged book. Will this report be made public?</p> <p>(6)The draft policy describes the process for challenging supplementary materials "that do not otherwise contain explicit content." What exactly does that refer to? Is anything up for grabs? Could it include books that contain LGBTQ themes, such as Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass? Or books in which rapes are central to the story, as in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird? Or books in which murder happens, as in Dostoyevsky's Crime and Punishment? What about books with racial themes, as in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God? Or books in which women do not obey their husbands, as in Kate Chopin's The Awakening? What about ribald discussions of farting, as in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, or characters who consort with magical beings, as in Homer's The Odyssey? All of these books are on national AP literature lists and many universities give college credit to students who score highly on AP tests.</p> <p>(7)The complaint procedure for supplementary materials that do not otherwise contain explicit content says that three parents, guardians, or community members will serve on both the school-level review panel and the district-level review panel. As with the CRC, who will select these individuals and how? Why are community members included, and how will the board ensure that there is not a stacked deck of individuals of a particular political standpoint? Will their names be public?</p> <p>(8)Is the school-level committee required to review every book for which a Media Complaint Response Form is submitted? What about the district-level committee?</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | <p>I strongly support this policy and commend the board's efforts in tackling this issue. I know it hasn't been easy. For two years, parents such as myself have wanted a more in depth policy to protect those who do not want such content available to their kids at school—and that request be solidified with policy.</p> <p>When the board brought librarians to the table and asked where the line for appropriate books should be drawn for the respective ages their libraries serve, I was hoping the two could meet in the middle. That was not the case. They could not say how many f bombs were too many or how many descriptive sex scenes or pictures thereof were too many. It was the perfect opportunity to defend the merits of their selections. Again, they could not draw a line and work from there. I watched one librarian in particular say that the Casey McQuiston novel "Red White and Royal Blue" made him turn 17 shades of red. It clearly crossed his line (a grown man) of sexually inappropriate but yet still couldn't draw the line in respect to the board's question. That's concerning.</p> <p>So when common ground (and common sense) can't meet, it is then ultimately up to the board/superintendent to resolve the issue. Like it or not, the board is top of the proverbial food chain in public schools. Originally (and two years ago) I would have supported a ratings system that parents could sign off on. Ratings and information about what we consume is in almost every facet of lives and there is a general consensus in society on what's appropriate for kids, and teens. I was told from the previous administration this was "too much work".</p> <p>Quite naturally when parties can't come to agreement the resolution resides with the governing body—the board. I applaud the decision to craft this policy and fully support this policy as well as their efforts.</p> | <p>I support this policy as well. I would only add that the professional review organizations (school librarian journal and Kirkus) that librarians use be changed. Common sense media is good. And yes even Booklooks is good despite its criticism for being connected to "extremist" parties. Had it not been for these "extremeist" I would be none the wiser as a parent of the content that was previously in these books had it not been for common sense and booklooks.</p> <p>I would only add that if these policies pass, or don't pass, that at the very least if a parent requests certain authors, books, or content is forbidden for their child, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) there is a formal document to be filled out and will be filed at the school and central office. 2) That it's coded in policy so these request have teeth and aren't optional. | <p>I see no issues with this policy and support it. I only ask that these forms be readily available at where the policy states they should be kept.</p> |
| Parent/Guardian | I support | I support | I support |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I support | I support | I do not like this approach, the keep the everyone happy approach does not work. Why is it the liberal ideology folks, only want supplemental materials revolving around the liberal way of thinking. Why not use supplemental materials on money management, investing and how to start a business. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I support the current protocol that is in place, and don't think any changes are warranted. | No changes should be implemented. | I don't think that there should be any changes to the existing policy. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I support the current school boards policy | I support the current school boards policy | I support the current school boards policy |

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| Rockingham County Resident | I support the proposed School Board Policy IIAB on Supplementary Materials. | I support the draft School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection. We should not have any sexually explicit material in our schools outside of sex education. | I support the draft of School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials. It is a thoughtful and fair process for addressing concerns. |
| Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | I support the revisions (in red I assume) of Policy IIAB. | I support the draft of Policy IIABA as proposed. | I am in favor of the draft of Policy IIABB as stated herein. |
| Staff member, Rockingham County Resident | I support the revisions. They add an additional layer of explanation and communication for parents and residents regarding the new supplementary materials policies. | I support this policy. It is clear and concise and reflects community standards. | I support this policy. It is thorough, well-written, and easy for parents and administrators to understand. It keeps the tiered system of review in place as requested by librarians while prioritizing the protection of the mind of the student. |
| Parent/Guardian | I think drafts policies should be created and shared before actions are taken. Given that the school board is not comprised solely of educators, nor is it a requirement to assume a position on the board, I'm overtly reluctant to leave decision making on such an important topic to the school board. What is missing | I agree that parents should be involved in the selection/deselection of supplementary materials, to an extent. I think teachers should be allowed to use their judgement to select the materials for their respective classes. | I think policy should be revised to state the principal will assist with submitting the complaint on the sexually explicit content complaint form, IF NECESSARY. A parent who does not need assistance should be allowed to submit the complaint form directly to the school and superintendent. |
| Staff member, Teacher | I think examples of lewd displays of nudity versus nudity are needed for teachers. Next year I have to teach the Virginia flag as one of our new SOLs. Do I need to inform parents etc.? | The request for me to provide a list of all materials is untenable. I liked have ov a thousand books, games, etc. in my Kindergarten classroom. I have so very many tasks on my plate that I cannot comprehend making a list this large and updating it regularly. This would take me over a full working day. Is the school board going to allot an additional working day just for this task? My classroom is open to any parent who wants to peruse my shelves and cabinets. I cannot comprehend adding additional tasks to overworked teachers year after year. | I don't understand the reasoning behind there being two separate complains procedures and deliberating bodies. Could this reasoning please be better explained? |
| Rockingham County Resident | I think the previous version of the policy was sufficient. In particular, I think the hyperfocus on sexually explicit material, which is mentioned in the current draft, is not necessary. | I think the current policies and procedures for selection of supplementary materials are adequate, and the creation of this new policy is not necessary or beneficial. The hyperfocus on sexually explicit materials is uncalled for, there are many types of content that could make a supplementary material inappropriate for use in RCPS but sexually explicit content is the only one explicitly mentioned in all the newly drafted policies. Also, the statement that parents "have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view" is unrealistic. For example, if parents believe the world is flat should the schools remove all images depicting the earth as round? Clearly not. Teachers are highly trained professionals and will teach an appropriate and widely accepted curriculum regardless of individual parent's wishes. | I think the current policies and procedures for selection of supplementary materials are adequate, and the creation of this new policy is not necessary or beneficial. The hyperfocus on sexually explicit content is uncalled for, there are many types of content that could make a supplementary material inappropriate for use in RCPS but sexually explicit content is the only one explicitly mentioned in all the newly drafted policies. |
| Parent/Guardian | I think the school board should follow the recommendations of professional educators and Librarians. The review/decision team should include non-school board members and No final decision making responsibilities in regards to books should be left solely to the school board. I do not trust this current school board due to the fact that they banned books before even starting this process among other reasons. | I think the school board should follow the recommendations of professional educators and Librarians. The review/decision team should include non-school board members and No final decision making responsibilities in regards to books should be left solely to the school board. I do not trust this current school board due to the fact that they banned books before even starting this process among other reasons. | I think the school board should follow the recommendations of professional educators and Librarians. The review/decision team should include non-school board members and No final decision making responsibilities in regards to books should be left solely to the school board. I do not trust this current school board due to the fact that they banned books before even starting this process among other reasons. |

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| Parent/Guardian | I think the students should be allowed to use whatever they need for school | Na | I don't think school aged children should be able to have this stuff in there possession |
| Parent/Guardian | I think the term "sexually explicit content" is very open to interpretation. The code referenced to define it in this policy is directly related to sexually explicit material being viewed on computers by state employees. I don't see how this fits with reading material as it's not at all the same thing. | Again, "sexually explicit content" as defined by the code referenced refers to materials viewed on a web browser, not in the context of a book or story. There's a big difference between what one person views as sexually explicit and what is truly obscene (which should be removed). | It should be stated and clear that the School Board must follow the recommendation of the CRC and the Superintendent, if they are in agreement. This is literally the community making our voices heard. For the school board to get final say and not be required to follow the recommendation of the CRC or Superintendent makes the whole policy a joke. Why go through all the trouble of making it look like parents have a say if the school board can just do what they want anyway? It would be great if there was a CRC for each district within Rockingham County. Each of our districts are distinct communities and it gives parents more of a voice within each district, rather than having 3 parents across the whole county represent everyone. (If this is already the case it's not clear in the policy.) Also, any removal of a book should only apply to the school where the complaint was made. Again, we're are a large, diverse community and I don't necessarily want complaints from one parent or group of parents on the opposite side of the county to affect the materials that are available in the schools my children attend. |
| Parent/Guardian | I think this book banning is ridiculous, they have never been a problem before. | I think this book banning is ridiculous, they have never been a problem before. | I think this book banning is ridiculous, they have never been a problem before. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I think this is well written and supportive of students and families that prefer to offer sexually explicit material to their own children at the times that they deem appropriate for their children. | This is also well written and supportive of families and students. | This policy appears to be complete and well written. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I totally support the new language drafted within this document. | I totally support the language of this document. | I totally support the language of this document. |
| Parent/Guardian | I trust teachers and librarians fully. I don't know why there is any question. | If teachers and librarians are able to keep and use books that are diverse and promote a safe and caring environment for all students, then I am in support. I have seen books being pulled from classrooms in Texas and Florida that should never have been pulled. There were many books with people of color that were pulled. I just don't want to see anything like that happening in our school district. | If a parent has a complaint, then they should take it up with the teacher/school/principal. Since there was already a plan similar to this in place, I always felt safe. I feel that this is a bit unnecessary. I also feel it was unnecessary to pull a number books without evidence of parent complaints. Why didn't those "parents" follow the procedure that was already in place? If unaware, why didn't the school board point them in the right direction. The school board should be aware of policies before making drastic decisions. |
| Rockingham County Resident | I trust the teachers and librarians to choose the appropriate books, magazines etc.not some Holier than thou person with their own agenda. | I have a hard time believing the state of VA wants to take education backwards.it is very clear you want to teach a particular religion not that which is scientifically proveable. I don't Know who you think you are fooling. | Teachers and librarians must be certified. They should not be wasting their time and talent With any of this stupid complaint policy. If they do not like the public schools let them pay for private religious schooling. I feel sorry for those students whose future will be limited by their parent ignorance. |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I urge you not to adopt this policy. Banning books in public libraries is a reprehensible practice, and this policy will result in compounding the mistake already made by the board. Far from protecting your students, your decision to ban books shows that you care more about elections and control than education and freedom. Parents who want to exert control over their own children are already able to opt out of public education, but parents who want to control public school libraries are trying to impose their views on the rest of the community. Please rethink this action and vote against the proposed policy.</p> | <p>Librarians should be in charge of libraries, not politicians.</p> | <p>Parents who don't want their children to have access to public school library resources have the option to take their children out of public schools. They should not have the option to remove materials available for other people's children.</p> |

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| <p>Staff member, Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I want to acknowledge what I see as effort made on the school board's part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You follow VATE's advice to create a standing book review committee that includes teachers, other educators, and parents/community members. I also see in this policy that the board wants to use different committees-- one for challenges regarding sexually explicit content and another smaller ad-hoc committee for all other challenges. 2. I see the board defines "sexually explicit content" in terms of VA Code 2.2-2827, which is a fairly--- and appropriately---limited definition. School Board Policy IIA, offers other definitions and processes. It looks like part of the third bullet is missing: "The superintendent is responsible for creating, implementing, and periodically updating procedures for implementing this policy. Those procedures will include <input type="checkbox"/> a process for identifying instructional materials, including supplementary materials, with sexually explicit content; <input type="checkbox"/> a process for identifying, prior to the start of each school year, any instructional material that includes sexually explicit content that may be used during the upcoming school year; <input type="checkbox"/> a process by which principals will provide written notice² to parents at least 30 days prior to the use of any instructional materials with sexually explicit content, that (a) specifically identifies the instructional materials with sexually explicit content, (b) informs parents of their right to review such instructional materials, and (c) informs parents of their right to have their child use, upon request, in a" <p>I suggest that the above is removed and put in place considering the following: * a process where parents and guardians are provided the titles of materials used for the "whole class." Where choice/supplementary materials are involved, students write in their choice materials, and the parent/guardian is given ample time to review and sign that they approve.</p> <p>This suggestion above may prevent a mass exodus of teachers from Rockingham County. It may also prevent teacher candidates from choosing to apply to work in RCPS. Finally, it may work to help teachers plan well in advance, communicate with their students, and, in turn, have students communicate with their parents. We want to encourage authoritative parenting rather than enforce authoritarian governance.</p> <p>The IIA definition of "sexually explicit content" is really broad. It could apply to about half of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet jokes.</p> | <p>I want to acknowledge what I see as effort made on the school board's part:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You follow VATE's advice to create a standing book review committee that includes teachers, other educators, and parents/community members. 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| <p>Staff member, Teacher, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I would like for more clarification of the supplementary materials please. As a resource teacher, I am always using supplementary items so I don't repeat with the same materials being used by the regular ed teacher. I find it bothersome that we have to identify ourselves. As a TAC rep for two schools, most teachers have personally told me they won't respond to this survey for fear of retaliation or job loss. And personally, I want to say shame on you RCPS School Board. You want to take action on this during our well deserved spring break. You just don't want to hear what teachers have to say as you have made up your mind about what your new book banning and supplementary policy will say.</p> | <p>We need to have supplemental materials to meet the needs of all learners... learning disabled to the gifted learner, to the English speaker to those learning to speak English. Many times, supplementary materials are the only way we can share diversity and meet the state requirements of celebrating heritage months, Black History Month, Women in History, etc. Who is really going to be listing and reviewing all of these supplemental materials? I recently got a huge grant from Merck where I have purchased books that relate science curriculum and made kits with stories, manipulatives and experiments for various grade levels. Do I need to turn that into the admin before I can even use it in the future? My admins are there to create positive environments and to promote healthy learning. If teachers have to turn in everything, you are going to be losing lots of teachers. They are already afraid to speak out and are going to say, "the hell with it! Why go the extra mile for making my learning environment one with variety and enriching experiences." What a sad situation this is causing in our county that was once a great place to work.</p> | <p>Parents have always had the ability to challenge library books. They have a right to do that as a person in charge of their own child's learning. Mature books need to be read by mature readers. But it's up to the parent to contact a school if they do not want their child to check out or read from a school library. This is not something that should be decided upon by a governing school board who has members that don't really support public education... refer to a Facebook post by Mr. Cross of a video that was titled, "Why Your child should not attend public schools."</p> <p>Our schoolboard (as a whole unit) needs to show more respect for the teachers in your system... and we may gain more respect for the schoolboard. Jackie Lohr, thank you for serving the Broadway community with an ability to listen, not jump to conclusions, and for respecting the families, students and teachers in your district.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I would like for you to consider the amount of personal money teachers put into their class libraries and their classroom materials. Teachers spend so much of their personal lives seeing things that would work for a lesson and then adding it to their materials because they care that much about their students and their profession. I cannot think of another group of professionals that spend their OWN money to bring things to work and spend their personal time thinking about their jobs that much. These types of policies are hurting teachers. You are going to make a lot of people self-censor their classroom libraries. What are you going to do about the hundreds of books a teacher who has been teaching for 15 years already has? That teacher will now not add as many items to their library because they know they have to go through a bigger process. We are professionals. Professionals with MULTIPLE college degrees and HOURS of extra professional development so that we know how to make the right decisions about what goes into our classrooms, offices, and into the school. Quite honestly these policies are undermining our professionalism. I think it is enough to allow a parent to talk to a teacher about their classroom materials if they have questions. They can go to the principal and have a conversation with the teacher and the principal if they are concerned.</p> | <p>Please make sure you review Virginia's policy for sexually explicit content and what it really means.</p> | <p>Library books and materials in the classroom are not the real danger to students right now. Social media, their phones, and vapes are a much bigger issue. I wish students would read more. Parents need to have conversations with their children about the issues they are worried about. I do not think these policies are necessary. I think teachers, librarians, and administrators are professionals who know how to pick the right materials for students.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I would respectfully ask that AP and Dual Enrollment teachers be given an exception to the blanket prohibition of sexually explicit materials. I ask that parents be given the opportunity to be given notice and "opt out" of specific texts that are designated sexually explicit in these college-level classrooms so that the student may be given an alternative text and that parents still have ultimate authority of what their child reads. As an AP and DE teacher there are several non-fiction texts that are not graphic in any way or gratuitous in the way that sexual content is addressed but that briefly address trauma in a way that is appropriate for a college-level class without specifics or promoting any kind of agenda. "The Glass Castle" is one such book. This author's story teaches students to appreciate their parents, their community, their education, their opportunities, and the power of a person has to overcome their circumstances. This is why I teach it year-after-year because students tell me it's the one book that has changed their life and made them appreciate and value what they have and take responsibility for overcoming their disadvantages. There is a brief mention of when the author experiences times in which they are almost taken advantage of but it is the author's experience and not written to be graphic or celebratory but a mere part of their story. These two events are briefly mentioned and not central to the message. If there is the possibility of a compromise if not an allowance of exception, in that AP and DE teachers may use the book with the omission of the pages or chapters that are sexually explicit, this would be proof that the content is not central to the story and that the book has merit outside of the sexually explicit content. Thank you for considering.</p> | <p>N/A</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>I'm against this.</p> | <p>I am against this.</p> | <p>I am against this.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I'm concerned that the current policy would remove educationally valuable materials from instruction due to the presence of suggestions of sexual content. There are important historical lessons that contain these topics (chattel slavery, comfort women, the Holocaust) where the proper context could aid in student appreciation and understanding of these important historical injustices. To deny high school students the ability to approach these topics in a mature and structured manner could put them at a comparative disadvantage.</p> | <p>No other comments at this time.</p> | <p>No other comments at this time.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>I'm concerned the interpretation of what constitutes lewd behavior, per 2.2-2827, will be inconsistently defined and applied. Additionally, the policy fails to denote any acknowledgement of differentiation for higher level learners in advanced classes. What is appropriate for a DE English student or an AP English 12 student is not appropriate for other students, even other students in the same grade level. I'm concerned poor administration of this policy will leave students in these classes with few reading options and thus poorly prepared and informed.</p> | <p>Teachers cannot be expected to have a mental catalog of the complete contents of every book in their classroom libraries. Teachers are not computer databases. This policy is designed to create a gotcha moment for the teacher who forgot which book contained which event.</p> <p>The requirements of this policy cannot be met. English teachers already carry heavy workloads, and this policy requires we all spend hours creating an inventory of every book in our classrooms, and then determining which of those books needs to be submitted for review to the Content Review Committee. The 12 - 14 hours a day I already work have no room for this burden, which insults my professional ability to make appropriate choices for my students.</p> | |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>I'm fine with what's written here.</p> | <p>Overall I'm ok with this. I feel that supplementary materials that the schools use to aid in teaching should be safe and appropriate for kids. However, this to me sound like these policies are geared toward teaching materials mainly not to the overall content within the school libraries. I feel like the school library needs to be a place for kids to be exposed to books of different kinds. Some kid aren't able to go to the public library and the one in school is their only exposure. We need to make sure the school libraries have reading material that any student can read regardless of whether it directly ties to what they are learning about. I do agree there needs to at least be some over sight in what the children are reading and checking out but I believe that responsibility should fall on the schools librarian and aids as they have the education and qualifications to make those kinds of decisions for the students. Not a group of people who aren't trained and honest don't seem to have our children's education and well being as their highest priority being in the positions that they are in.</p> | <p>I overall have concerns with the process outlined here. I still don't understand why a group of people that aren't qualified are making decisions about the books in our schools. Our school librarians are educated and trained to be in their positions and I for one trust their judgment in these regards. I am concerned that the members of the school board who have the final say in these matters do not have the necessary education to be making these decisions on what materials we have in our school. Also, why in the world would you make a committee to review material being complained about if the school board has the final decision. That makes no sense to me as the school board could just override any recommendation of the committee to suit their own interests.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>If we are serious about keeping sexually explicit material away from our children, then you should be banning cell phones in school, not books.</p> | <p>If we are serious about keeping sexually explicit material away from our children, then you should be banning cell phones in school, not books.</p> | <p>If we are serious about keeping sexually explicit material away from our children, then you should be banning cell phones in school, not books.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Im not sure I understand why Library books need to have such strict policy. These are option and parents have a say already.</p> | <p>I disagree. I just read one of the banned books on your list and it didn't really have anything wrong... I am not sure I trust the school board about why this is happening.</p> | <p>I would prefer child experts, like Phycologist in the field with experience of all kids make the final decisions. Are you taking away books that my child would better relate to and one help them?</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>In a world where the internet makes endless quantities of pornography available to children, it is absolutely necessary that they be able to find materials that help them understand appropriate ways of dealing with their developing sexuality and intimate relationships with partners. Removing all sexually explicit material from our schools denies teenagers the opportunity to learn these things in age-appropriate ways with positive, constructive messaging. It would make more sense to have either an "opt-out" or an "opt-in" option where parents can choose whether and when their children are ready to engage with these materials.</p> | <p>This line: "Supplementary materials do not exist to provide universal coverage but to provide materials focused on all of the above goals" seems deliberately misleading. "Universal" coverage is not possible, but it is critically important to have representation for all segments of the RCPS student body.</p> <p>"Parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view" must go both ways, to enable what children read as well as to restrict it. Parents must have the right to make sure that their children are represented in the material available in the school and that their children have access to age-appropriate materials that deal with all the important aspects of their lives, including sexuality, sexual identity, race, gender, and religion.</p> <p>"Teachers and librarians shall not acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplementary material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content." As stated above, this is not acceptable.</p> | <p>This policy should not exist.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>In general, the policy seems fairly reasonable.</p> | <p>Again, the policy seems generally reasonable. The important thing is to make sure that librarians are in charge of the selection process.</p> | <p>The composition of the content review committee is too heavily weighted towards parents. One fewer parent and ne additional librarian would be appropriate.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Instructional materials are used for direct instruction of students. Materials used to "extend, expand, and supplement" should be challenging academically. They should expand our students' minds -- our middle and high school age children are going to encounter sexual experiences firsthand or through secondary experiences. This is not new, these are not 'new issues.' Approaching these subjects through the safety of a book is PREFERABLE to locker room talk, and internet searches. Blocking books with any sexual content from being read is ignoring reality. The benefits of these books far outweigh the 'scary' sexuality that they are already consuming.</p> | <p>This looks so great on paper. Please try to consider the fact that all learners include RCPS students who are not white, Christian, or straight. And consider the response of Jesus to these learners.</p> | <p>Devastated and heartbroken for our students who will be at a disadvantage for not having the full library available to them at school. They will enter college with students who have read these books, who have more open hearts and minds. They will be less tolerant, less educated, and will suffer the loss of great teachers who have left due to the actions of this board. I am so very, very disappointed.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It is an unnecessary policy. You are being dishonest.</p> | <p>It is an unnecessary policy. You have removed books that do not meet this removal criteria and kept books that do.</p> | <p>This is an unnecessary policy and benefits no one. The only valid thing to do is not use any of this.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It is contradictory to state that you are delegating the responsibility of choosing the supplemental materials to the schools and librarians, and then defining specific criteria by which they can choose those materials. The teachers, librarians, and school administrators are the most qualified to make the decisions for what is appropriate for their school. They should be trusted to use their professional expertise. We are doing a disservice to our students by making blanket restrictions based on the biased viewpoints of a subset of Rockingham County.</p> | <p>Again, the policy has contradictory statements. "Empowering ALL Learners," "values the richness of diversity," "Providing a balanced collection," "Promoting critical thinking skills," "Supporting leisure reading." All of these, along with other statements in the policy, are completely negated by stating that sexually explicit content cannot be allowed under any condition. We should have considerations for age-appropriateness, to be determined by the schools. High school students are old enough to be aware that people have sex and what that means. If parents do not want their children to have this exposure, then I am in support of those parents requesting that their children not be permitted to check out those materials. I do not agree that my children should have limited access to literature at their public school if the professional teachers and librarians have deemed it to be of value. It appears that the School Board is seeking to restrict knowledge, which I know of no other reason to do so than to control what people think and believe.</p> | <p>I can't take any policy seriously that states, "The School Board's decision will be final." It makes the School Board appear afraid and that it must wield absolute power. No checks and balances. I think America has a good idea with the checks-and-balances philosophy. Otherwise, a policy to allow for parents to request a review of material of which they have a concern is appropriate.</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It is disappointing that decisions about the availability of books will not take context into account. Several of the books that have already been removed were required reading in my high school honors and AP English classes. Do they contain language and/or difficult themes? Absolutely. Are they award winning, classic pieces of literature that offer numerous learning experiences for young adults? Most definitely. It is fine to have a policy in place for reviewing challenged books, but it must look at the work as a whole. I fear this policy will result in overarching removals of books that should be available for our students. Parents who do not want their children to access certain titles or themes have that right and can even currently be accommodated by our librarians. Those parents that want to give their children access to read freely should also have that right.</p> | <p>Are you expecting all teachers to submit a list of all the materials they have in their personal classroom libraries for approval? This feels very distrustful of teachers' abilities to make professional decisions in their own planning and instruction.</p> | <p>I am confused as to why a committee is created to hopefully read the work in its entirety, discuss, and make a recommendation, but the ultimate decision rests with the board. Shouldn't the committee that has read and debated the book as a group be the decision makers in this case?</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It is disgusting to me that librarians comments weren't taken seriously and we're not included in this policy. Librarians go to school for a masters degree And have specialized training in their field. And here we have members of an uneducated board determining that librarians can't do their jobs.</p> | <p>It's disgusting to me that the school board believes it should have final say and what books are purchased or allowed inside of our schools when none of our school board members are librarians or especially trained in that area of expertise.</p> | <p>It's disgusting to me that the librarians are being ignored and that there are no reports that have actually happened for the books that the school board unilaterally decided to ban and remove from shelves. It's disgusting to me that the board has decided to completely disregard a policy that has been in place for many years and no one else has had any problems with until this new board decided it was gonna come in and make sweeping changes and, cause fear and take away from the matters that are actually important like teacher retention and student education.</p> <p>How is it that a brand new school board comes in to create a new policy and literally the entire policy is written in red ink because it is entirely new and they are just tossing out the window of policy that's been in place. I could understand revamping a policy, but completely writing it a new? Ignorant.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It seemed to be accurately written. It seemed to be directed toward classroom teachers. How would it be applied to staff like nurses or counselors who may be able to help students with materials not specifically related to a class?</p> | <p>You're requiring staff to do a LOT of extra work in order to provide lists of materials. Even elementary libraries contain thousands of books that would need to be listed. Who is going to review all these lists? Classroom teachers buy lots of materials, often from their own personal funds, to provide classroom lending libraries. Now you're going to require that they catalog those materials and lose preparation time? Why not just work to make the challenge process better and more available to teachers and parents? Again, who is going to be reviewing all these lists? From what I have read and heard about recent school board actions, much of your concern seems to be centered around students having access to materials on LGBTQ topics. Books and other materials may be the only way for some students to access information on these topics in a manner that ensures their personal safety while still answering their questions. Reading materials may also help them understand the point of view of others. Making these materials inaccessible will not keep young people from asking questions but it may force them to seek information from less accurate or less reputable sources. Examining their own sexuality is a perfectly normal and necessary developmental task for adolescents.</p> | <p>No comment</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It seems like library books are kind of shoehorned into this policy. There is a natural auxiliary use of library books that goes beyond use for a specific course. They foster a love of reading and an opportunity to explore more worlds and experiences. The addition of library books into this existing policy seems awkward. Additionally, I strongly disagree with the blanket prohibition of "sexually explicit content". This policy covers 12 years. There are situations where a book that contains sexual content would warrant inclusion in a High School library because it otherwise offers a novel or unique perspective. Discretion and professional judgment should be used to make this decision.</p> | <p>This review process seems deeply impractical and places an undue burden on teachers (librarians already have a thorough, digital list of resources). Also, it is not clear what a teacher must do if a family member objects to a book. I hope the implication is not that they should "deselect" it based on the complaint of one family member. I reiterate my strong disapproval of the blanket ban on "sexually explicit content".</p> | <p>It seems like the last line would have sufficed. If this committee does end up happening, it should be a requirement that someone (if not all) on the committee read the selection in its entirety to gain necessary context. Additionally, selections should remain in circulation until the review process is complete. Because of the sheer number of books, this process, again, seems deeply impractical.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>It seems that prior to the revisions, library books that students choose for their own reading pleasure were not considered "supplementary materials". The revisions appear to be written with the intention of pulling those items under the "supplementary materials" definition. The text now sounds awkward and clunky as an adaptation that is different than the original intent, especially this phrase tagged onto the end, "or be otherwise available in the school library or classroom library for supplemental use".</p> | <p>The structure of this sentence copied below is bizarre/unclear, since immediately prior to this statement, the language specifically talks about teachers and librarians selecting/deselecting materials. "Through the selection and deselection of these materials, it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." Maybe just a wording issue. Sentence could start with "It is..." and leave out the first clause.</p> <p>I think the whole section on "Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials" is unnecessary and burdensome. Libraries already keep catalogs that can be viewed at any time. Teachers could simply keep a running list of the supplementary materials in their classrooms. Those lists should be available upon request. The regular reporting makes unnecessary work for everyone.</p> | <p>This section is where things really get weird. In general, the writing of this whole section is not concise or precise enough to be effectively applied. Nearly every instance where the word "otherwise" is used, the sentence would more clear if "otherwise" was removed from the sentence.</p> <p>My comments thus far have mainly focused on instances of poor writing in these policies. I would also like to share my thoughts on the intention of these policies. I agree that there may be materials that are not suitable for children. However, I am generally uncomfortable with the idea of school boards actively banning books. I trust school librarians to cultivate a catalog of diverse and suitable materials.</p> <p>I have concerns about how individuals will be chosen to serve on review committees.</p> <p>Ultimately, though, I think that it is incredibly foolish and naive to think that school libraries are the only place that children might encounter ideas that are inappropriate, sexually explicit, violent, or hate-based. Children live in a world where this type of thinking and material is literally one click away on a smart phone, television, computer, or even espoused by individuals they may interact with outside of school. It is our responsibility as parents and educators to prepare and educate children about how to think critically, evaluate content, and react to all of the ideas they may encounter in their daily lives. It is much better to teach children how to evaluate the merits of ideas, think critically, and act with compassion and discernment than to simply try to shelter them from ideas we may not deem suitable for them. This is a fool's errand. Our children will be exposed to many things that may be confusing, misleading, and ultimately damaging to them as individuals if they are not given the tools to evaluate these things for themselves. A robust sex education program just one part of this approach. Children should be taught about propaganda, advertising vs. information, how social media skews reality, historical discrimination, etc., etc. Let's equip our children to handle when they are confronted by noxious ideas, not try to play whack-a-mole within a very small slice of the world that they are exposed to daily.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>It seems this policy will hinder the teacher in helping provide literature that could provide students with opportunities to see and relate to characters that may be going through challenges of similar experiences. Are we able to trust our teachers that they provide age appropriate material for those they are teaching?</p> | <p>See my other responses. Not all resources are appropriate for certain ages, but our teachers should be informed of what can be recommended at appropriate ages. Let's not hinder the teachers from doing their job of providing opportunities for kids to learn and grow.</p> | <p>The challenge policy across the board is hard when there are differences between grade levels and what students should be able to learn from at the appropriate age. Students have access to a lot of real life situations and sheltering them as they grow in to becoming young adults is not helpful for them as they make decisions of how they respond. The teachers are trying to provide guidance as they mature and grow with age appropriate materials that they may be able to learn from.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>It would be nice if there was an emphasis on fact based materials verses opinion/fiction/politics materials. Otherwise it looks good.</p> | <p>It would be nice if there was an emphasis on fact based materials verses opinion/fiction/politics materials. Otherwise it looks good.</p> | <p>The one thing that seems to be missing from this is what will happen to the materials in question during the proceedings process. That should be defined as well. (Apologies if I missed it but I did not see that specified) Otherwise the process seems good.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Keep religion and politics out of school policy decision making. Stop book bans. Stop pushing the GOP theocratic agenda. The very policies you're pushing are the foundation for indoctrination. The books you're trying to ban are not even in my daughter's school library. Cannot wait for the conservative evangelical bigots to be elected out of Rockingham county school board.</p> | <p>Keep religion and politics out of school policy decisions.</p> | <p>Keep religion and politics out of school policy decisions.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Keep the books, learning materials that the children need</p> | <p>The books , materials are important to the children at school</p> | <p>Books and reading materials are important to keep in the libraries at the schools</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Key points: 1. It should be easy for me to restrict what my child accesses (ie. via permission or restriction form), but VERY HARD for me to restrict what someone else's child accesses. 2. The School Board and its policies should not be antagonistic toward teachers and staff. 3. The point of education is to train functional adults who can process new ideas and deal with adversity.</p> | <p>The definition of sexually explicit, even in the VA state law, is open to wide interpretation. Specifically, the definition of "lewd." Age should play a big factor, such that a book that may not be appropriate for elementary school, need not necessarily be removed from the high schools. For instance, I can assure you that many parents don't think any of the recently "temporarily" removed books are objectionable. They should all be made available again to the appropriately aged students. It is unreasonable to ask the teachers and librarians to pre-emptively guess what the a few individuals on the school board may, in the future, deem sexually explicit or inappropriate. Therefore, the policy statement that librarians and teachers should "deselect" materials creates a liability for them that is antagonistic and totally unnecessary. Remove this clause from the policy. The notification regarding recently selected materials should allow parents to "opt out" of their own child's access to them, but should not prevent their implementation for others.</p> | <p>I do not think there should be a separate procedure for sexually explicit and other. This overly complicates the process. We have wonderful teachers and staff who have had extensive training, access to professional organizations, and other skills to make their best effort to educate our children. They are on the side of the schools and students. The School Board should not assume it knows better. Let teachers do what they do best: Teach.</p> |

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| Rockingham County Resident | Librarians and teachers have the necessary educational and classroom experience to make intelligent decisions concerning supplemental materials. They have witnessed the constant evolution of classroom materials, so they are experts at adapting to new ideas and materials. To stay abreast of new materials, they actually read the books and are familiar with the content. Allowing librarians and teachers, the experts, to do their job will be benefit the schools, students, and community. | The policy states that, "Creating a caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity" is one of the goals of The Supplementary Materials Selection. It also states, "Supplementary materials do not exist to provide universal coverage." How can diversity be obtained if universal coverage is not a goal? We should strive to meet the needs of ALL students. Parental involvement is key for successful students. However, most parents lack the necessary skills to make decisions concerning supplemental materials, but they should be involved by voicing their opinions. | Complaints about supplemental materials will happen. One person's complaint, however, should not be enough to subject materials to a review. There are measures in place to prevent students from checking out objectionable materials. Parents can request that the librarians red flag any materials they find objectionable. The availability of this tool needs to be thoroughly explained to all parents. Librarians and teachers are trained to handle this issue. Treat them with the respect they deserve and allow them to use their professional skills to tackle this issue. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Librarians in our schools are teachers. There is no need to be redundant in saying teachers or librarians. | I am not concerned over my "fundamental right for what my children hear read or view" in the library. However I am concerned over what my children have the ability to hear, read, and view on fellow students cell phones and chromebooks. Many students do not have the same restrictions and filters on their devices that my child's device has. Snapchat, photographs taken in locker rooms and bathrooms, internet searches, youtube videos, games, etc are a distraction and create a harmful environment for my children. | There is no need for this policy. We already have a procedure for reporting supplemental materials ie books via each schools individual policies which were presented to the school board at the work session with current librarians. This procedure, according to educated, intelligent, and qualified librarians has worked in the past for any complaint that was received. I am saddened that the librarians voices and recommendations were not heard or taken into consideration from that work session. |
| Rockingham County Resident | Librarians should have a say in whether supplemental materials with sexual content are chosen for their libraries. The selection process should allow for the context of the sexual content. Only by reading the books, viewing the other materials, referring to reviews of those materials, and the make up of the school where the materials are to be used should influence the acceptability of supplemental materials. Cherry picking a few lines from certain books does not qualify the rejection of those materials. | Librarians should have the authority to choose materials they deem appropriate for the students at their schools. They already vet the materials before purchasing to make certain they are a good fit for their schools. I do not agree with having a Content Review Committee reviewing all the materials with any sexual content. Let the librarians do their job. | Complaints from parents about supplemental materials is inevitable. However, there is already a way to prohibit their child from obtaining those materials. The library can "flag" a student's name. This action prohibits that student from checking out materials his/her parents deem not appropriate. Not every parent feels the same about every piece of material. Some parents want their children to learn about others' strifes and ways of life. The sole authority to deny inclusion of materials should NOT lie in the hands of the School Board. The Board emphasizes that parents have the ultimate say over their children's education. If parents desire, they can prohibit access to objectionable materials. Do not force your beliefs onto all the parents. Remember, you have other opinions and beliefs to consider. Go back to the county librarians' recommendations for guidance to address this situation. Do not look to other school districts' guidelines. |
| Parent/Guardian | Listen to the professionals. Not an elected board of doofuses. | Listen to the professionals. Not an elected board of doofuses. | Listen to the professionals. Not an elected board of doofuses. |
| Staff member, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Looks fine | ok | ok |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Looks good | Looks good | Looks good. I'm so thankful the Rockingham County School Board is taking steps to protect our children! |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Most school employees do not feel safe completing this google doc. RCPS employees should receive a link that allows for anonymity if the board is interested in our views on these policies. We understand the need to not allow outside responses to the policies, but two links could have easily been sent out. You will be receiving fewer responses from my school for this reason.</p> | <p>"Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials" It is insulting to our years of experience to have our supplementary materials need to be listed and sent to our admin and also be available for parental review. It makes us feel distrusted and our judgement undermined. Teachers in my building are saying they will simply stop purchasing materials. This is a sad situation for our students.</p> | <p>There is no point to have a CRC committee if the recommendation they make to the Superintendent and he agrees with is then able to be overridden by the school board.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>My opposition to these policies and this small-minded school board is absolute. My reasons are many, but the top of the list is simply from the fact that the small-minded school board is operating in opposition to the slogan they ran on. Rather than putting the choices in the parents' hands, this small-minded school board is taking those choices away and acting unilaterally. They are acting unilaterally in an ignorant and uninformed manner. "Temporarily removing items pending review" or whatever the actual quote was is a weak attempt at denying the instance of book banning. What they did/are doing is banning books. Period. They are doing it based on their own small-minded ideology, without actually researching anything. If proper research was done, this small-minded school board wouldn't have banned a book simply because they screwed up the author's name.</p> <p>I also find it curious that the books that have been removed have a theme to them. They are, without question, anti-LGBTQ+. The small-minded school board members want "sexually explicit" material to be harder for youths to obtain, yet none of the titles removed include heterosexual relationships. Other titles remain in school libraries that go into much greater detail on sex. There are titles readily available that openly discuss sex between a man and a woman, discuss sex with multiple heterosexual partners, and even discuss incestuous sex between a brother and a sister, and multiple marriages between brother and sister. It remains on the shelf because it spawned a popular television show.</p> <p>This policy does nothing useful. The well-educated, professional teachers and librarians who work in this school district had a policy before, developed an updated policy once this small-minded school board starting their politically motivated "crusade", and these policies were summarily ignored. These previous policies had mechanisms for parents to be alerted about certain books that their students may be trying to check out, which would then allow the parents and the children to have the discussion, and to put the decision in "the parents' hands" as these small-minded school board members campaigned on. What these policies are actually doing is alienating the professional educators who work tirelessly to educate our children. Nationwide, the rate of teachers/educators leaving the field each year is alarming, and the actions of these small-minded school board members are going to make that a reality in our district. We are going to lose the best-of-the-best, who will move on to opportunities in other school districts, and we will be left with lesser teachers, or those who subscribe to this small-minded, narrow philosophy of the world.</p> <p>Well educated children are exposed to a broad spectrum of topics and perspectives. 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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>My thought: I have a daughter in elementary and I agree with prohibiting sexually themed books for supplemental. Students in K - 5th grade are not pubescent and should in theory not even be familiar of what sexuality is. That's disturbing to think kids that age would even be presented with that on their radar. Once you see something, you can't unsee it. So I commend RCPS for taking steps on protecting the most innocent citizens. It's common sense.</p> | <p>Understand the policy and agree</p> | <p>Understand the policy and agree</p> |
| <p>Administrator</p> | <p>n/a</p> | <p>I am concerned with the phrasing in this section: Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials; as currently written and in reference to the definition in IIAB of supplementary materials this list would be enormously extensive. My recommendation would be to include a portion of the policy on a 'sensitive content' definition and then have those be the supplementary materials that are submitted for review. From an elementary perspective, the topics that come to mind are things such as the events of September 11th. This is a topic that an elementary administrator should be in communication with faculty on what materials might be used in the classroom or books that are available on this topic to ensure that it is appropriate for a young learner. However, kindergarten classroom libraries may have thousands of books, charts, video clips, posters, etc. that are on topics such as colors, seasons, days of the week/month, counting, letters, shapes, etc. and that would not be a productive use of a teacher or administrators time to review each individually.</p> | <p>n/a</p> |

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| Administrator, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | N/A | N/A | I have a few concerns about the "CRC". If I am understanding correctly, ONE committee of seven people is appointed for a calendar year to navigate all complaints related to sexually explicit content. Not knowing what type of volume this committee may see, that could be a tremendous job for this group. Only one "teacher or librarian" will be appointed to the CRC, yet three "parents, guardians, or other community members" will be named in addition to a PAC representative. I would like to see more educators have a voice in this process and believe those educators should align with the academic level of the challenge (for instance if a challenge is for a material located in a middle school, the teacher/librarian should have expertise in middle school curriculum and student development of that age group). Furthermore, I would hope that any "community members" have a direct connection to RCPS (ie business partners, REFI board members, etc.). Finally, I am confused by the 90 day timeline of the CRC process, compared to the 30 day school based process (for complaints not of a sexually explicit nature) when I have not seen any verbage that states the committee will read the whole book (or consider the full context of other content). Decisions to declassify a book based on potentially one excerpt, and the interpretation of one group, does not consider the literary merits of the entire work. |
| Parent/Guardian | n/a | n/a | The complaint form should require the complainant to specify how the sexually explicit material is in violation of the IIA definition. Perhaps the definition should be repeated on the form for reference. Clarification needed on: How will the members of the CRC be chosen? What will the selection process be to ensure diverse viewpoints and sufficient expertise? Will materials still be available to students while a complaint is processed? (I think they should.) |
| Parent/Guardian | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Parent/Guardian | N/A | Although I trust my child's Principal at her current school, how will parents be advised of these new supplementary materials once they are purchased. I see that they will notify within 30 days, but should there be more guidance on how/where that will occur? | N/A |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | N/A | The Board needs to be conscious of increasing teacher workload. The most detrimental outcome of policy change would be the loss of highly qualified, motivated, caring teachers who feel administrative duties and reporting are too cumbersome to allow time for quality instruction. | It should be a requirement that all personnel involved in the review of challenged materials read the item in question in its entirety. Context matters and those making decisions should be well informed. |

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| Rockingham County Resident | N/A | N/A | Overall, I am pleased with this policy. However, I would like to see more representation from teachers and librarians on the committees. Specifically, for the CRC and division level committees, I believe there should be at least one teacher AND one librarian, rather than a teacher or librarian. In this policy, it was unclear whether supplementary materials under review will remain in the schools and accessible to students as they are being reviewed. I believe that they should remain accessible to students during this time. |
| Rockingham County Resident | N/A | You say you want to "Empower ALL learners," yet you recently removed materials that had LGBTQ+ themes from schools. That's definitely empowering ALL learners. You also want to provide material that promotes critical thinking. A lot of materials that promote critical thinking are being banned by GOP politicians because it causes people to think. The School Board contains a majority of supporters of the GOP, so I'm not sure how you're going to promote critical thinking, unless it's against the truth. Students who decide to take AP English are subjected to materials that contain themes you have banned or want to ban, so how are they supposed to learn anything in preparation for their exam. You put all of these "guidelines" into a document to try and make it neutral, but after these policies pass, they won't be followed. You're just doing a disservice to students and teachers to appease the GOP members of the community. | You better have a mix of parents and community members that support both political parties on your review committees. If you don't, decisions will be politically motivated, which can cause protests from students, teachers, and community members. |
| Parent/Guardian | Na | Based on the definition of sexually explicit material in Virginia Code § 2.2-2827, seems to reference porn. I'm sure that this will instead be used to further repress positive learning about gender and sexual identities as has been the trend with conservatism. Denying students access to positive examples of successful people sharing their identities, whether it be cultural, sexual, or other, only leads to negative outcomes: depression; anxiety; suicide. | Na |
| Parent/Guardian | Na | Na | Can a community member, who is not a parent/guardian/student, file a complaint? I don't think they should be able to but I just wanted to clarify. I think only parents/guardians should serve on the CRC. I'd like to know more about the selection process for the CRC. Would the parent represent different grade levels or different school districts? Would parents need to apply to be on the CRC? If so, how would the position be advertised? Would contested material remain in the library while it was reviewed, or would it be removed until a decision is made? |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>NA</p> | <p>NA</p> | <p>As a parent of two elementary children, resident of the county, and an education researcher, I can do nothing but shake my head in disbelief and disappointment regarding this proposed policy and process for two reasons. First, the definition for what constitutes sexually explicit materials has been clearly defined by the state legislature and RCPS board, which are duly elected representative bodies. While parents/guardians should be able to express concerns about school materials, there is no legitimate rationale that can be offered as to why would RCPS would not solely rely on the trained expertise of our superb teachers and librarians to make informed decisions regarding whether adopted materials meet the outlined definition. The review process of creating a working committee to review materials comprised of two licensed teachers and THREE non-trained, non-licensed community members is especially concerning for multiple reasons. These include (a) that numerically favoring non-trained "off the street" community members greatly diminishes the role of our expert teachers/librarians in making informed decisions based on education best practices for all students, (b) failure in recognition of the expertise of our educators, (c) there is no clear detail provided as to the mechanism by which how community members will be selected for committee work or what qualifications are needed, which can both greatly influence the decisions made, (d) the personal views and beliefs of the three community members - who are appointed to a committee rather than elected or hired as employees - may not reflect the views and beliefs broader community or be in the best interest of all RCPS students, and (e) there is no detail as to how the community members will separate their beliefs and views from the decision-making process to ensure that "partisan and doctrinal" considerations (as specifically noted in IIABB) will not come into play when determining educational suitability. Further, it can be questioned what expertise does the school board members have or their ability to separate themselves from "partisan and doctrinal" considerations - given public positions that several have previously taken - in making final decisions about educational suitability of adopted materials. In short, it is not clear as to how the review process benefits from community (or school board) participation relative to relying primarily on the experience and expertise of our trained educators. As an alternative model, it could be suggested that having one non-educator on the review committee would help provide an outside view with the balance being licensed educators.</p> <p>The second principal concern that I have is that challenge policy has the potential of setting precedent that could be later applied to other aspects of teaching and learning. It is not a far stretch to see how the practice of challenging educational materials could be leveraged by a small group parents or members of the school board towards K-12 curriculum censorship.</p> <p>Collectively, this politically-motivated policy is bad for our students. bad for educators. and bad for our</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Necessary additions to existing policy to reflect A, B, and form</p> | <p>Under "Notification" it seems a bit ambiguous to state that teachers and librarians will "regularly submit". However, this wording is better than too prescriptive, because that could be burdensome. In general, I am in support of parents being able to review what is available for their child to observe and read while at school.</p> | <p>Necessary addition to current policy to allow parents an avenue to evaluate both sexually explicit and other potentially objectionable material. While the proposed policy is detailed, I am curious about 1. how parents would be able to learn about material, other than their child telling them (free access?), and 2. Seven member CRC committee review (internally, very likely they will not all agree), so does majority rule regarding recommendation and/or will Board know about CRC discussions and "voting"?</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>no comment</p> | <p>no comment</p> | <p>For any complaint, if the decision by the school board regarding the challenged material is to remove the book/material from the school library, this decision should apply only to the school within which the challenge was initiated rather than applying to all schools within RCPS.</p> <p>In addition, it is very important that RCPS communicate more clearly to all parents about the option that parents have to inform the school of particular books/supplementary material within their child's school library that they wish to deny their child the ability to check out. This is a good option for parents with concerns about their own child's access to particular books/materials, while not infringing on the rights of other parents within that school. Thank you!</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>No comments.</p> | <p>1. Please define who makes up the Content Review Committee. 2. The policy should specify where the list recently selected supplementary materials will be posted.</p> | <p>1. Why are their separate procedures for complaints outlined in this policy? What is the reasoning for two different procedures? 2. Instead of making this more difficult for parents, stick to one procedure for challenging materials. 3. Please define who makes up the Content Review Committee. 4. There is no mention of the process to be followed for the books that the school board removed from libraries in January. How will these books be handled? Since not all had formal complaints lodged, will these books be put back on the shelves for parents to challenge? 5. Why does the School Board have the final decision for challenged material? Shouldn't this lie with an educated group that is specialized in this decisions?</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>No concern here though I am not sure why Selection and Adoption were removed</p> | <p>Under "Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection." Using the definition provided of Supplementary Materials "but are not limited to such items as school library books, classroom library books, magazines, newspapers, charts, pictures, certain workbooks, kits, videos, film strips, and games." So this is asking that everytime I use a magazine or news article, video or tutorial to bring current relevant information into my class I will need to provide this to my school principle? Wow! How will this be organized? This will make it so much harder to diversify what you use to demonstrate relevance and respond to differences in student's reading and comprehension abilities. This is so wide open that it will be easy to miss reporting something. I find new data, charts, photos all the time - I recommend tutorials for students who are struggling with a concept - I bring in short videos to bring the concepts alive. We add activities when we see that students need more reinforcement. I cannot even fathom what this would mean to my schedule and mental health while trying to meet the needs of 3 different preps and many teachers have more than that. This is overwhelming.</p> | <p>It should be required that complainants read the entire book before filing a complaint that does not fall under the sexually explicit guideline set up by the State.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>No concerns with policy IIAB</p> | <p>No concerns with IIABA</p> | <p>I have a number of concerns about proposed policy IIABB.</p> <p>The wording in paragraph 1 could be considered offensive and is ultimately unnecessary. Consider changing it to the following: "The Rockingham County School Board places with its teachers and librarians the responsibility for the selection, approval, and use of supplementary materials. However, the School Board recognizes that parents or guardians may object to certain materials being made available to their children. Therefore, the School Board establishes the following processes and procedures for parents and guardians to follow in expressing and resolving concerns about supplementary materials."</p> <p>Under the Procedure section, consider changing the word "use" to "availability." Furthermore, careful consideration should be given to allowing the School Board to disregard the recommendation of the committee. According to the Supreme Court decision in Island Trees Schools v. Pico, the school board's decision to remove books from the library was contrary to the recommendation of the appointed committee. This fact signaled to the Court that the decision was politically motivated and violated First Amendment Rights of students and they were ordered to replace the removed books on the shelves. I would hate to see RCPS entangled in litigation over this policy. I suggest changing the procedure to remove the School Board from the decision-making process to avoid these issues. That, or add a clause that says the School Board shall abide by the recommendation of the committee.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>No feedback - I am supportive of the draft policy as proposed and encourage all board members to vote in favor of these changes.</p> | <p>No feedback - I am supportive of the draft policy as proposed and encourage all board members to vote in favor of these changes.</p> | <p>No feedback - I am supportive of the draft policy as proposed and encourage all board members to vote in favor of these changes.</p> |
| <p>Administrator, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>No feedback here</p> | <p>My problem with this policy is in this statement "Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection." Teachers are overworked, and the way this reads is supplemental material is any material a video, an article, etc. that is used by the teachers for classroom instruction. I think this adds a lot of work to them to regularly, submit links, and videos and resources for review. I think that it also means that examples of events happening with science and social studies that are current that teachers may feel that they don't have the freedom to explore those current events because they can't get the 30 days reviewed.</p> | <p>I really wonder why we need a separate procedure from the media complaint form would there be a way to merge those forms</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>No objections.</p> | <p>No objections.</p> | <p>Having only one teacher or librarian on the CRC is unacceptable. There should be at least two; teachers are the ones who will be implementing the material and be knowledgeable about how the text will be used in the classroom for instruction. Having two teachers or librarians instead of one will allow for a clearer view of what is going on in schools and fairly represent faculty. Furthermore, each member of the CRC should be required to submit a report proving they have read the book in its entirety, not just the debated excerpts in question, before submitting the single final report to the Superintendent. I am afraid that some members may only read those sections, rather than the whole, which will lead to misunderstandings and misrepresentations of materials. There needs to be an accountability measure for the members. Without accountability, there will be no trust.</p> |
| <p>Teacher, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>No specific feedback</p> | <p>Regarding ... "Through the selection and deselection of these materials, it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view". I would remove this statement. This policy is for guidance for teachers and librarians in selecting supplemental materials. It is not a statement or policy for parents. Parents do play an essential role in guiding their child, but I don't believe that is a policy statement. Perhaps a statement recognizing the role of parents would be better placed in the RCPS Student Handbook, if it is not already there.</p> <p>"Authority (qualifications of those responsible for creating material)" It is unclear to me what this is referring to -- creating what material? What is determining authority?</p> | <p>It seems the 2 sections could be covered under the Supplementary Materials Complaint Procedure section, which sounds much like the procedure which has been used to this point. That procedure seemed to work well in the past, and would now be official policy.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>None</p> | <p>When it says 'regularly submit a list,' I believe a defined time frame would be beneficial. If it's every school year, what time of it? Being more specific would be beneficial.</p> | <p>Will this format be followed for ALL materials and from ALL groups of people? I feel this process has become very political. I AM NOT HAPPY WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD BANNING ("temporarily removing") MATERIALS BEFORE DOING THIS!</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>None</p> | <p>None</p> | <p>There's a few places where the word "should" is used in instances where the intent appears to be a requirement for a RCPS employee. For example, in item 3 in the Procedure section, it reads, "The committee should work to provide a recommendation within thirty (30) days." If this is intended to be a requirement placed on the committee, which it appears to be, the word "shall" should be used.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>none</p> | <p>none</p> | <p>For the committee, where are the parents chosen from? The parents that sit on this deselection committee should be diverse--not from the same school area. If a book is going to be pulled from ALL area schools--then ALL of the areas should be represented.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>None</p> | <p>It seems you are putting an extra burden upon teachers, librarians, and administrators with this policy. These are professionals hired by Rockingham County. Please treat them as professionals and let them do their jobs. There is no need for extra oversight. What we have been doing in the past has been working. We have a system for parents to challenge materials...we don't need an extra layer so that the school board can feel as if they have all the power for what our students read. Our librarians are amazing, as evidenced by our recent RCPS teacher of the year in Dana Roderick. Let them be the judge for what their library needs.</p> <p>I encouraged my then 10th grader last year in her Honors English 10 class to read "The Kite Runner" because it is one of my all time favorite books, I should preface by saying that reading is one of my favorite hobbies. It was an amazing experience as a parent to have book talks with her and she even chose another book by the same author later in the year to do a compare/contrast paper. Fast forward a year and my next daughter who is a 9th grader needed a book to read so I recommended "The Kite Runner" to her and her sister gave the same endorsement. She finished it up right around the middle of January, coinciding with the same time that the school board presented your 57 books that were removed from the library. To my shock "The Kite Runner" was on that list. I just had my 9th grader do an entire 9 weeks book study on that book. I was worried she was going to have to do a class presentation and wouldn't be allowed because of your list. My daughter and I had great conversations about this book. You are taking this away from other parents. If you say you support parent rights, then let parents have the right to parent and discuss books with their children. Needless to say, I have lost all confidence in this board and the decisions you have made over books.</p> <p>You have picked books as your way to show authority when books are not the problem. Some books on this list were not even in our schools and if you looked at how many of them were actually checked out and read, you would find there would not be many. The problem is not that our students are reading these inappropriate books it is that they are not reading at all and instead are fixated on their phones. If the school board would spend as much time as they are on books and try to fix the cell phone problem, then maybe we would get some where.</p> <p>My 9th grader said it best after I showed her your book list and that the book that she had just done her project was being removed from all schools...."The school board can worry about books, after they fix the problem of drugs in our school. I can't go into the bathroom without smelling weed all the time."</p> | <p>How will you make your committee for review transparent and fairly balanced?</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Ok | Ok | Ok |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Parents should control what their students have access to NOT the school. Parents should be actively involved in seeing what material their student has checked out and review sensitive subjects with them. Books should not be pulled that is censorship which our government does NOT support under the constitution. | . | . |
| Staff member | Please go back and review the fourteen pages that the librarians provided to you. | Please go back and review the fourteen pages that the librarians provided to you | In doing things this way you are making long standing and excellent librarians feel unappreciated and less than. Our librarians work hard to find good materials, they have spent years studying and have the expertise to make the best decisions for our students. When setting up the committee to review the materials there needs to be librarians on that committee Please let librarians do the job that they studied and spent many hours of professional development on. |
| Parent/Guardian | Please have boundaries on what are children are exposed to. | In total agreement with restrictions on materials inappropriate and against our family values. | Thank you |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Please see below.</p> | <p>Please see below.</p> | <p>"The First Amendment imposes limitations upon a local school board's exercise of its discretion to remove books from high school and junior high school libraries."</p> <p>That text is from the first paragraph of a 1982 US Supreme Court decision.</p> <p>Citation: Bd. of Educ., Island Trees Union Free Sch. Dist. No. 26 v. Pico, 102 S. Ct. 2799, 2802 (1982)</p> <p>Full text: https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/457/853</p> <p>The RCPS school board is attempting to define "sexually explicit content" under a Virginia statute that was written re Virginia-state-owned computers operated by Virginia state employees. Specifically, Virginia Code § 2.2-2827 .</p> <p>However, the RCPS Board's definition will not hold up in court. The cited Virginia statute does not apply to schools. It *especially* does not apply to school libraries, which, the US Supreme Court took pains to make clear, are special places:</p> <p>" 2 (a) Local school boards have broad discretion in the management of school affairs, but such discretion must be exercised in a manner that comports with the transcendent imperatives of the First Amendment. Students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate," Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist., 393 U.S. 503, 506, 89 S.Ct. 733, 736, 21 L.Ed.2d 731, and such rights may be directly and sharply implicated by the removal of books from the shelves of a school library. While students' First Amendment rights must be construed "in light of the special characteristics of the school environment," <i>ibid.</i>, the special characteristics of the school library [<i>italics</i>] make that environment especially appropriate for the recognition of such rights.</p> <p>"3 (b) While petitioners might rightfully claim absolute discretion in matters of curriculum [<i>italics</i>]by reliance upon their duty to inculcate community values in schools, petitioners' reliance upon that duty is misplaced where they attempt to extend their claim of absolute discretion beyond the compulsory environment of the classroom into the school library and the regime of voluntary inquiry that there holds sway." Supreme Court full text, <i>ibid</i></p> <p>If the RCPS School Board, or any school Principal or Admin, or any Central Office employee, attempts to censure or discipline ANY teacher or librarian regarding the specious RCPS School Board "Supplementary Materials" Policy (aka Book Policy), including but not limited to asking any teacher to resign or even apologize for any book-related noncompliance to the Policy, the School Board will be opening RCPS to litigation. Under First Amendment Law, such litigation will have a good chance of extracting monetary damages from RCPS, and also from the individual School Board members</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Policy IIA for Instructional materials uses the definition given there of Sexually Explicit for the purpose of alerting parents about content that is being delivered that they may want to opt their children out of, NOT blanket prohibition for all schools. When you use blanket rules like this to PROHIBIT materials you open up the possibility of misuse of the rule to exclude even what reasonable people would consider minor "infringements". The bible could easily be prohibited based on that definition as there are plenty of examples in it of sexual conduct, and even descriptions of sexual bestiality. A reasonable person would not consider this an unreasonable use of sexually explicit text because its CONTEXT is appropriate. So I oppose the last sentence of this policy that states that "Supplementary materials containing sexually explicit material, as that term is defined..., are prohibited." I believe that it should be: ... are subject to required written notice to administration, parents etc as set forth for classroom instructional materials in Policy IIA. Why would supplemental materials be held to a more restrictive policy than classroom materials? That just makes no sense. All materials should be treated as set forth in Policy IIA, whereby parents are notified of any materials that contain the content so that they may consider the material themselves and determine whether or not to allow THEIR children to use the materials. We already have technology in place to manage the notifications as well as handle the restrictions requested by parents (librarians can restrict access on a per student basis with current technology).</p> | <p>Again I oppose the severe restriction of selection (as well as the banning....or as they put it "Deselection") of books based solely on containing "sexually explicit material". I repeat my stance from the previous question that this takes the choice out of the hands of individual parents for THEIR individual children and places it in the hands of a few. And again, context is important as well as the maturity and mentality of the students in question. Only the individual parents are in a position to determine that for their child. So don't opt to BAN these materials, but I suggest again that they be treated like the instructional materials that contain sexually explicit materials, and mark them as such, notify parents so that they can request that their child be prohibited from using specific materials, while allowing other parents the freedom to give their children more options where they feel comfortable. This is a reasonable option that is manageable with current technology, and it wouldn't even take much effort on the parent's part. You could even give parents the option of stating at the beginning of the year "no sexually explicit content for my child", and librarians can enter those students with that restriction in the system. Or parents could take the time to review the lists as they come out and restrict on a material by material basis if they had the time and inclination. I feel strongly that this would be a good common, middle ground.</p> | <p>The definition of sexually explicit is too broad and does not take into consideration context or merit of a material when the only outcomes are banned or not banned. This policy reads as though their job is to determine "if it contains sexually explicit material", and if it does, it should be deselected. Full Stop. I believe that the only material that should be REMOVED or prevented from purchasing is material which has no other merit. Language should be added that specifies that the committee must consider the context of the sexually explicit language as well as the other merits of the book (artistic, educational, moral, etc). A book should only be removed if it has no merit beyond the delivery of sexually explicit material. The other option for the review committee should be to mark the material as Contains sexually explicit material (and with thought and consideration by professionals there could be other categories of this designation that provided more context, much like a movie rating system...contains vulgar language...contains graphic sexual descriptions... contains sexual violence...etc), and those marked as such would be publicly distributed to affected parents (i.e. has students at the school where the material is being considered) so that parents could request their student to be prohibited from obtaining. This would use existing technology and be eminently doable. I believe an expansion like this of this review policy would be a common, middle ground that would allow librarians to serve a diverse community while making it easy for parents to make decisions for their own children.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>Public school serves all students who reside within its district borders to provide equality of opportunity and access to a rich, worthwhile education as a backbone of democracy. Standards for that education are set at the state level, and policies at the local level that codify means for one person or group to impose their home-level standards onto the entire district are antithetical to the democratic values and equity at the heart of the American public educational system. To make a simple analogy: Virginia sets laws on teen drivers for when they can start practicing, what hours in the day they can drive, and how many passengers they can take; while one family may decide an appropriate additional limitation for their teen may be to put their cell phone in the trunk during transit based on that individual's personality and impulse control and that family's values and experience, it is not permissible or appropriate for that family to demand that their neighbor's teen do the same.</p> <p>Our existing policy is reasonable and serves all students and their families. This proposal is an overreach of governmental power into the lives, opportunities, and choices of individuals. The existing policy protects parents' rights; the proposed policies give individuals power to infringe and impose on the rights of other parents across the division.</p> | <p>If this policy were to be adopted, I foresee numerous problems with its implementation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is the Content Review Committee being selected? How is each committee to address a "Media Complaint Form" being selected? Are these ad hoc committees or term appointments? Is there an application process or will these be political appointments? Will the board have the power to remove committee members, and, if so, will it be at will or only for cause? Will there be an effort made to ensure all locations of the district are represented? How can you fill these few positions with experts in both primary and secondary literacy needs and psychological and cognitive development? Who is the Supervisor of Media Services since that is not a position in RCPS? 2. How will the various review committees make reliable, valid, replicable decisions? There is no rubric for their decision; there isn't even an expressed requirement that they read the text under review, let alone read it in its entirety. What assurance do all stakeholders have that this committee will not employ pretextual grounds either to discriminate against legally protected groups or to act capriciously and in bad faith? If there is no rubric, no oversight, and no means to challenge the decision, then this legislative body should not be appointed but rather elected. Furthermore, it should be elected by all the stakeholders that will be affected by their decisions, to include students, parents, and staff. 3. The existing policy IIA and these proposed policies cannot be reconciled. Our existing policy states that teachers will notify parents if an instructional material may be considered sexually explicit as defined by that policy and that a parent may review that material, request an alternative, and expect their student will be freely given a nonpunitive option. Not only is this codified policy, this has also been widespread practice in the county any time a parent or student wishes to get an alternative assignment for any reason, not just for potential sexual content. If these new policies and the existing one coexist, how are we to determine what is instructional and what is supplementary when students are required to pick independent choice books for assignments? If a student is reading an award-winning novel in AP Literature with a scene of sexual violence with parent notification and consent, that instructional material now becomes supplementary for all other students? Is that AP student supposed to cover their book so that no one else may possibly see it? Furthermore, am I supposed to confiscate a student's personal property if they bring in a romance novel from home to satisfy their silent sustained reading requirement in class? 4. What is the reasonable expectation for classroom libraries? Teachers are passionate, professional educators who care for our students and our community. We want to act in good faith and with fidelity to accepted policy. We want to protect ourselves and | <p>If this policy were to be adopted, I foresee numerous problems with its implementation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is the Content Review Committee being selected? How is each committee to address a "Media Complaint Form" being selected? Are these ad hoc committees or term appointments? Is there an application process or will these be political appointments? Will the board have the power to remove committee members, and, if so, will it be at will or only for cause? Will there be an effort made to ensure all locations of the district are represented? How can you fill these few positions with experts in both primary and secondary literacy needs and psychological and cognitive development? Who is the Supervisor of Media Services since that is not a position in RCPS? 2. How will the various review committees make reliable, valid, replicable decisions? There is no rubric for their decision; there isn't even an expressed requirement that they read the text under review, let alone read it in its entirety. What assurance do all stakeholders have that this committee will not employ pretextual grounds either to discriminate against legally protected groups or to act capriciously and in bad faith? If there is no rubric, no oversight, and no means to challenge the decision, then this legislative body should not be appointed but rather elected. 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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Referring to the Virginia Code, 2.2-2827 about restrictions on state employee access to information infrastructure. Inside that code is another code, 18.2-390, a criminal code, does not seem complete without the related code exempting schools, libraries and museums: Code 18.2-391.1, titled Exceptions to application of article. Schools, libraries, museums – these are exempt.</p> | <p>I am confused as to the reference to the public library as selection criteria. As far as I know, they only separate material by Juvenile-Easy, Juvenile, Young Adult, and Adult, which is wide ranging, and not really an "age" classification.</p> | <p>Why would the School Board have final say over "sexually explicit content" complaints? And why would it be a different process than other material complaints? Trust the very knowledgeable and well-trained staff and administration of the school district in this process.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Remove the text referring to sexually explicit content. What is even meant by this? Teens engage in sexual behaviors and activities. It only makes sense that the books they read, especially those that are meant to reflect pre-teen/teen life, would include some of this content. Let the teachers, librarians, and parents make these decisions, since they are the ones who are on the ground with these kids everyday, they are the ones with the proper education to make these kinds of decisions, and they are the ones who actually have a stake in the kids in our public schools--unlike the vast majority of the school board itself.</p> | <p>Remove the text referring to sexually explicit content. What is even meant by this? Teens engage in sexual behaviors and activities. It only makes sense that the books they read, especially those that are meant to reflect pre-teen/teen life, would include some of this content. Let the teachers, librarians, and parents make these decisions, since they are the ones who are on the ground with these kids everyday, they are the ones with the proper education to make these kinds of decisions, and they are the ones who actually have a stake in the kids in our public schools--unlike the vast majority of the school board itself.</p> | <p>Get rid of this and go back to the policies that were already in place. Get over yourselves and realize that you're doing more harm than good. My god, have none of you read a history book? Book banning doesn't work. People who ban books have always been on the wrong side of history. You've made our county a national embarrassment. Let the teachers and librarians do their jobs without your uneducated, politically biased, pseudo-Christian concerns getting in the way.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Revision seem to be for clarification. They seem reasonable.</p> | <p>Our children need to be protected from sexually explicit and other material which may compromise their innocence prematurely or harm their psychological well being. It is important that the material inside the public school domain support and advance the primary objective of the school system which is to provide for a classical education and promote good citizenship. For these reasons I fully support the monitoring and oversight of Supplementary Material Selection by our elected school board or their representatives.</p> | <p>I approve of providing a process for parents to express their concern or objection to sexually explicit or other material used in the public school system. Time will tell if the policy presented here is a reasonable and effective way to do that.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Section 2.2-2827 references nudity as referenced in Section 18.2-390. I find the definition to be vague and would preclude many books considered to be classic literature to be used for teaching. In fact, using a strict interpretation, I don't think I would be able to use the Bible due to "uncovering of nakedness." I know this isn't the purpose here, but we have to be intellectually honest.</p> | <p>Section 2.2-2827 references nudity as referenced in Section 18.2-390. I find the definition to be vague and would preclude many books considered to be classic literature to be used for teaching. In fact, using a strict interpretation, I don't think I would be able to use the Bible due to "uncovering of nakedness." I know this isn't the purpose here, but we have to be intellectually honest.</p> | <p>I am concerned that there is not an appeal process for material the school board may ban. The school board is, unfortunately, becoming more political in nature. This is unfortunate for parents, teachers, and children. Ultimately, decisions on educational material should not be made by a body that is under political stress without an appeal process initiated by those who are formally trained professionals and not someone who runs for political office.</p> |

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| <p>Librarian, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>See Below</p> | <p>The VA policy requires parents be notified to sexually explicit content that will be used, are you asking that they keep a log of EVERY supplemental resource that is purchased for review? Having teachers submit a list of supplemental materials for review appears to be a mountainous task. Teachers are already overwhelmed with everything they are asked to do and asking them to keep a list of everything that has been purchased as supplemental materials seems like overkill to me. Teachers will just "make do" with what they have instead of seeking out better resources. With library books I don't see it as a big deal. I have been doing this for the past 2-3 years with the new books that I purchase for the library through a "Hot New Reads" video that goes out to students and parents each time I put out new books. I don't have anything to hide and I welcome family engagement over books.</p> <p>I feel like the board's definition for sexually explicit materials is going to remove a lot of worthy books from the shelves, especially at the high school level. These kids ARE dealing with issues related to sex, and while all books are definitely not appropriate from a school library, there are books where students can see a character going through something they have gone through/are going through and see how the character navigates the situation to see hope in their own situation. If these kids are doing the work to read a several hundred page book, I would say you can guarantee they are able to read it with a broader lens than just "reading about sex." If that's all they wanted, they could get on their cell phone and type in sex, and not only read about it, but watch videos too. We are in more danger of kids NOT reading at all than we are in danger of kids finding out about sex through a novel. Books that deal with suicide, gun violence, bullying, drugs, and abuse are all things today's kids are dealing with, and I'm concerned that books that could help them navigate these issues are being taken from them through this policy.</p> | <p>I don't understand the need for a sexually explicit form vs other reasons for challenges. We appreciate when parents bring a concern about a book to our attention, but I really don't understand how sexually explicit material deems the need for a whole other form. I don't believe that anywhere did I read that the person making the complaint needs to read the entire work. While I know context has been argued as not important, it is in fact important. If the person making the complaint reads the entire work, they may find that whatever their complaint is about (whether sexual content or not), they may see how it contributes to the overall story and is in fact necessary. They may also find that no, that wasn't necessary to be in the book, but at least they will have all of the information and will not have just picked out a couple of lines that shocked them because they heard about it from some other source that also didn't read the entire work. In the past, all people on the committee needed to read the book cover to cover before participating in the discussion about the book. That is a reasonable request. I do appreciate that the person having the complaint must fill out a form so there is a paper trail of these complaints that can be followed and verified.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>See below</p> | <p>Censorship limits intellectual freedom and stifles discourse essential for societal progress. Shielding children from certain content through bans does not prepare them to navigate the complexities of the world. This is a waste of time and resources of the school district. There's far more challenges the school district should be tackling.</p> | <p>Parents certainly have a role in guiding their children's reading choices based on their values and beliefs. However, advocating for book bans can lead to unintended consequences. Firstly, what one parent finds objectionable may be considered valuable by another. Secondly, banning books can restrict access to diverse perspectives, limiting opportunities for children to learn about different cultures, experiences, and ideas. It's more effective for parents to engage in open discussions with their children about the content they consume, providing guidance and context rather than resorting to censorship.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>See next section</p> | <p>See next section</p> | <p>My comments are for all 3 sections- This board is acting inappropriately by taking books off the shelf that have value for students. I remember in 6th grade when our teacher told us about a banned book, "To kill a mockingbird". All I wanted to do was read that book. It had such an impact on me, so much that I named my son after the book. You will always be on the wrong side of history when banning books. It will not have the impact you are seeking. The controversy has likely caused more students to read these books and I'm sure sales of those books has increased. I know I have bought several to read and so far have not found anything to cause a ban. I would like to see a process in place like Beaufort, SC where community members were invited to read the books and vote if ban worthy. That process took a year— not a one week survey. You can't put signs in your yard during Covid mask wearing saying let the parents decide and a year later do a full swoop of books on a shelf and decide for parents and students. Over half of the board homeschools. What are you even doing on a public school board? The library process was already working. My guess would be a bigger problem is children not reading at all and consuming too much wide open internet. You do not represent the students of Rockingham County and we know this attempt at surveying community members is for nothing. We already know your minds are made up even without reading the books. We will be working hard to replace you.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Seems logical - teachers and librarians should be given the professional autonomy to make selections of this nature.</p> | <p>Adding a level of bureaucracy that is not needed. Rules beget rules - you cannot entrust children and young adults to teachers/librarians, pay them poorly, and then micromanage them.</p> | <p>Ridiculously over the top. The board should not be involved in day to day or operational activities - that is why you hire professionals. Opens the door to an incredible amount of administrative burden that will bog down an already stressed staff. The "complaint form" is redundant to already established policies. This whole "thing" simplifies a nuanced and complicated issue that deserves a respectful and considerate discussion and in many ways demeans those professionals that have already been dealing with these issues.</p> |
| <p>Staff member</p> | <p>Seems reasonable.</p> | <p>Again, seems reasonable.</p> | <p>Seems like a fair process.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>Since I have no feedback on this specific document, and since there is no place to note other general feedback, I will do so here.</p> <p>Does credit need to be given if other schools' policies were used in the formation of this policy? Some of the text in these documents can be found elsewhere, such as here: https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/hcpsva/Board.nsf/files/CRHR9E6AA33F/\$file/Draft%20Policy%20Library%20Materials%20Review%20JA.pdf</p> <p>While the school board met with librarians, to my knowledge there has not been a general meeting or an attempt to communicate with teachers beyond maybe on an individual basis here and there. Both teachers and the community should be heard from; however, I imagine the responses gathered here will be an overwhelming amount to read. Teachers should have been consulted separately as professionals who work with children every day and see the varied needs of larger groups.</p> | <p>This statement seems overtly aimed at the current political climate and does not seem necessary in a policy guiding educators: "Through the selection and deselection of these materials, it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view."</p> <p>This policy will restrict the ability to purchase timely books of interest: "Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection."</p> <p>It is also unclear what happens to the current books in the library and classroom libraries. Will a list of those books need to be provided?</p> | <p>The CRC should have more than one current educator on it. As stated, there will only be one librarian or teacher, but it will have a member of the "Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee; and (v) three (3) parents, guardians, or other community members." The imbalance here is notable.</p> <p>More representation by people currently working with the larger group of students seems necessary, especially considering an elementary school educator might not have as much expertise with high school students and vice versa. Multiple educators from different grade levels should serve as a part of the CRC.</p> |
| <p>Staff member, Teacher</p> | <p>Since supplementary materials are non-instructional, but can still be related to learning, I think the previous method that librarians and teachers used (i.e., the Bookfinders process and the small book committees at the individual school level when challenged) are more than enough to consider which books are appropriate to have available but not outwardly pushed onto any of the student body. These prior processes worked fine and still allowed for freedom of choice among our population.</p> | <p>Again, the previous processes of Bookfinders and small book committees at the individual school level when challenged worked to mitigate any personal objections while still providing material that "empowered ALL learners," as the school board is eager to remind us is their motivation. These processes were not the say-so on any single individual. All individuals involved represented multiple perspectives in both training (staff) and community (parent) representation already. The 30 day list for all parents is therefore unnecessary unless they need to come to the teacher to speak personally about books their own student brings home.</p> | <p>The proposed make up of the CRC is set up to be unequal from the get go, having only one librarian/teacher in attendance. For all the good the school board claims to have in mind, they are not in our classrooms interacting with our multitude of community populations. Having only one teacher on the CRC board will stifle the only on-the-ground representation you have in the procedure.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>sounds good</p> | <p>I honestly would like to see the banned list. I think, especially for high school students, they should be able to have access to books that cause reflective thinking. I am not suggesting that pornography be acceptable, certainly not. But please remember that there are very important literary works that should be acceptable despite some cuss words and sexual content.</p> | <p>sounds good.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Strongly encourage further consultation with legal counsel in light of the governor's recent memo. This policy is in direct opposition to VA state law, and sets the board up for an expensive legal challenge if enacted as written. The use of the term "sexually explicit content" as defined in the VA Code extends the purpose of the model policies (which label materials for parental notification) to prohibiting library materials. The governor's recent memo explicitly stated that the current law was not to be interpreted in this way (to censor library content).</p> <p>The governor makes clear that he is FOR parental rights--not against. Parents should have the say in what their children read in the public schools--not what OTHER people's children have access to. This draft policy is exactly opposite the parental rights promises on which the school board members campaigned.</p> <p>By replacing "sexually explicit content" with "harmful to juveniles" as defined in VA Code 18.2-390, this policy would similarly remove inappropriate supplemental materials, be aligned with the law (state and federal), and honor parents' rights. By using the definition for "sexually explicit content," this policy misuses the model policies (endangering public opinion about them) and the VA Code to censor and subvert parental rights rather than inform and empower parents.</p> | <p>By replacing "sexually explicit content" with "harmful to juveniles" as defined in VA Code 18.2-390, this policy would similarly remove inappropriate supplemental materials, be aligned with the law (state and federal), and honor parents' rights.</p> <p>The call to deselect "sexually explicit content" already known of within the collections leads exactly to the embarrassing "banning dictionaries and Bibles" waste of taxpayers money that has been playing out in Florida.</p> | <p>By replacing "sexually explicit content" with "harmful to juveniles" as defined in VA Code 18.2-390, this policy would similarly remove inappropriate supplemental materials, be aligned with the law (state and federal), and honor parents' rights. By using the definition for "sexually explicit content," this policy ignores the intent of the supplemental materials. It goes beyond the model policies and VA Code to censor and subvert parental rights rather than inform and empower parents.</p> <p>Offering two processes--one for sexually explicit and one for all others--is confusing at best. I am unable to figure out which one I would use as a parent with a concern about what my child was reading. Having two separate processes is confusing and creates unnecessary overhead for parents, administrators, and teachers trying to parse which one to use. It makes absolutely no sense to send one type of complaint through one process (standing content review committee, fast track to decision solely by the school board) and the other through a different (but confusingly similar) process (with an entirely separate ad hoc committee; with a measured path of review and decision, followed by appeal processes).</p> <p>The process described for complaint about supplemental content "sexual explicit content" leads exactly to the embarrassing "banning dictionaries and Bibles" waste of taxpayers money that has been playing out in Florida. It fast-tracks the complaint to a school board decision (with intermediary steps to provide recommendations), rather than the much more reasonable process outlined for content that is not deemed sexually explicit. It offers no mechanism for verifying which process a parent should use or to move frivolous complaints from the "sexually explicit content" process to the non-sexually explicit content process. There is no limit on how many complaints a parent can make at a time. The "sexually explicit content" process neglects to state that materials shall not be removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. The process for "sexual explicit content" appears to be hastily written without clear understanding of the manufactured crisis that it creates.</p> <p>Neither of the processes listed require the full work to be read and the full context of the work to be considered. Using the definition for "harmful to juveniles" and a single process for all complaints would correct this problem.</p> <p>The school board members have already demonstrated publicly in their social media posts that they are committed to making decisions based on religious doctrine. The school board is not qualified to make a final decision as to whether materials are harmful or innocuous to juveniles, and they are not making good faith, objective decisions based on the diverse needs of our community. This is a lawsuit waiting to happen.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Strongly encourage further consultation with legal counsel in light of the governor's recent memo. This policy is in direct opposition to VA state law, and sets the board up for an expensive legal challenge if enacted as written. The use of the term "sexually explicit content" as defined in the VA Code extends the purpose of the model policies (which label materials for parental notification) to prohibiting library materials. The governor's recent memo explicitly stated that the current law was not to be interpreted in this way (to censor library content).</p> <p>The governor makes clear that he is FOR parental rights--not against. Parents should have the say in what their children read in the public schools--not what OTHER people's children have access to. This draft policy is exactly opposite the parental rights promises on which the school board members campaigned.</p> <p>By replacing "sexually explicit content" with "harmful to juveniles" as defined in VA Code 18.2-390, this policy would similarly remove inappropriate supplemental materials, be aligned with the law (state and federal), and honor parents' rights. By using the definition for "sexually explicit content," this policy misuses the model policies (endangering public opinion about them) and the VA Code to censor and subvert parental rights rather than inform and empower parents.</p> | <p>By replacing "sexually explicit content" with "harmful to juveniles" as defined in VA Code 18.2-390, this policy would similarly remove inappropriate supplemental materials, be aligned with the law (state and federal), and honor parents' rights.</p> <p>The call to deselect "sexually explicit content" already known of within the collections leads exactly to the embarrassing "banning dictionaries and Bibles" waste of taxpayers money that has been playing out in Florida.</p> | <p>By replacing "sexually explicit content" with "harmful to juveniles" as defined in VA Code 18.2-390, this policy would similarly remove inappropriate supplemental materials, be aligned with the law (state and federal), and honor parents' rights. By using the definition for "sexually explicit content," this policy ignores the intent of the supplemental materials. It goes beyond the model policies and VA Code to censor and subvert parental rights rather than inform and empower parents.</p> <p>Offering two processes--one for sexually explicit and one for all others--is confusing. I am unable to figure out which one I would use as a parent with a concern about what my child was reading. Having two separate processes is confusing and creates unnecessary overhead for parents, administrators, and teachers trying to parse which one to use. It makes absolutely no sense to send one type of complaint through one process (standing content review committee, fast track to decision solely by the school board) and the other through a different (but confusingly similar) process (with an entirely separate ad hoc committee; with a measured path of review and decision, followed by appeal processes).</p> <p>The process described for complaint about supplemental content "sexual explicit content" leads exactly to the embarrassing "banning dictionaries and Bibles" waste of taxpayers money that has been playing out in Florida. It fast-tracks the complaint to a school board decision (with intermediary steps to provide recommendations), rather than the much more reasonable process outlined for content that is not deemed sexually explicit. It offers no mechanism for verifying which process a parent should use or to move frivolous complaints from the "sexually explicit content" process to the non-sexually explicit content process. There is no limit on how many complaints a parent can make at a time. The "sexually explicit content" process neglects to state that materials shall not be removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. The process for "sexual explicit content" appears to be hastily written without clear understanding of the manufactured crisis that it creates.</p> <p>Neither of the processes listed require the full work to be read and the full context of the work to be considered. Using the definition for "harmful to juveniles" and a single process for all complaints would correct this problem.</p> <p>The school board members have already demonstrated publicly in their social media posts that they are committed to making decisions based on religious doctrine. The school board is not qualified to make a final decision about materials that are harmful or not to juveniles, and they have not demonstrated an interest in making good faith, objective decisions based on the diverse needs of our community. This is a lawsuit waiting to happen.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Superintendent Shifflett, Please recognize that this "prohibition" is making our county look terrible on the state and national stage. The state regulations ask for parental notification (not prohibition). The school board members may not be re-elected, but the legacy of leadership will have lasting effects.</p> | <p>This is a bureaucratic mess. If a parent doesn't want their child reading a book, they can read it first and ask for an alternate assignment, as has always been the case. The curriculum takes professional decision-making that takes into account student engagement, age-appropriateness, and college-preparedness. Life requires critical thinking. RCPS students will not be prepared for college readings if we prohibit the reading of nationally recognized titles with strong content. While references to sexuality appear in many of the removed books, sexuality is part of humanity and is part of the great literature of our culture. Again ---- the school board members are not speaking for the majority of the community, and have LIED about where this list came from. Please stop this nonsense. We can't ban our children from books, the internet, or TV. Instead, we have to raise critical thinkers who communicate with their parents and friends about these issues.</p> | <p>Don't school personnel have enough to do? We HAVE to trust our schools and our teachers. Most survey respondents LOVE RCPS teachers and schools! Please stand up to these narrow-minded board members. If a parent doesn't want to have a student read books that they don't want them to, then that is fine, but removing them for all students is a travesty. It is age-appropriate for students to wonder about sexuality. Public education is for all students and strong leadership is needed at this time to support our teachers, administrators, librarians, and our kids who need to be well-educated.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>Teachers already use digression when choosing materials and supplementary materials. It is interesting that the school board is needing to make a policy for something teachers already do. There is an appearance of a lack of trust of teachers and assumption that teachers want to expose students to inappropriate material.</p> | <p>"Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee."</p> <p>The above sentence is asking to create an undue amount of work for teachers and should be removed from the policy. Many teachers (especially at the elementary level) have generated an extensive library over the years. To ask a teacher to submit a list of every book he or she has in a classroom library is insulting and will take a massive amount of extra time. I have nothing to hide from my classroom library and would be more than happy to let anyone come to my classroom to inspect my classroom library.</p> <p>It is too much to ask for teachers to follow procedure? As ridiculous as it was to ban "The Invisible Boy," schools and libraries are following the the directions of the school board.</p> | <p>I want to start by saying that there is some content that absolutely should not be in the schools. As the current policy reads, I do believe Rockingham County Public Schools will face lawsuits because of inconsistent application of the book removal process. I hope the school board also consults legal representation when making denominations when deciding about removing books. That also though raises concerns about how much money from the school budget will be directed to legal fees instead of spending money on educating children.</p> <p>Wouldn't it make more sense in educating parents about the current policies in place that would give parents a voice in what books their children are allowed to read. As I know some parents thought they didn't have a voice with the previous school board it appears now a different set of parents don't have a voice with the school board.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Teachers and librarians are professionals who do not need to be micromanaged. They have years of training and are capable of making appropriate Supplementary Materials choices for their students. Most parents are NOT teachers. They do NOT have years of training. It is absolutely fine for each parent to determine what their child is allowed to read. It is NOT right for their opinions or religious beliefs to dictate what ALL students are allowed to read. This country was founded on the separation of church and state. Stop policing books and start helping teachers and librarians by making their pay a livable wage and listening to their guidance and opinions. They know the ends and outs of teaching, most politicians don't. Start treating teachers and librarians with respect and dignity. This micromanaging is undermining their authority with the students and is making the students think that they are in charge. Step up and support your teachers and librarians instead of setting up road blocks. If you continue on this path then Rockingham County will soon have a major teacher shortage.</p> | <p>Teachers and librarians are professionals who do not need to be micromanaged. They have years of training and are capable of making appropriate Supplementary Materials choices for their students. Most parents are NOT teachers. They do NOT have years of training. It is absolutely fine for each parent to determine what their child is allowed to read. It is NOT right for their opinions or religious beliefs to dictate what ALL students are allowed to read. This country was founded on the separation of church and state. Stop policing books and start helping teachers and librarians by making their pay a livable wage and listening to their guidance and opinions. They know the ends and outs of teaching, most politicians don't. Start treating teachers and librarians with respect and dignity. This micromanaging is undermining their authority with the students and is making the students think that they are in charge. Step up and support your teachers and librarians instead of setting up road blocks. If you continue on this path then Rockingham County will soon have a major teacher shortage.</p> | <p>Teachers and librarians are professionals who do not need to be micromanaged. They have years of training and are capable of making appropriate Supplementary Materials choices for their students. Most parents are NOT teachers. They do NOT have years of training. It is absolutely fine for each parent to determine what their child is allowed to read. It is NOT right for their opinions or religious beliefs to dictate what ALL students are allowed to read. This country was founded on the separation of church and state. Stop policing books and start helping teachers and librarians by making their pay a livable wage and listening to their guidance and opinions. They know the ends and outs of teaching, most politicians don't. Start treating teachers and librarians with respect and dignity. This micromanaging is undermining their authority with the students and is making the students think that they are in charge. Step up and support your teachers and librarians instead of setting up road blocks. If you continue on this path then Rockingham County will soon have a major teacher shortage.</p> |
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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Teachers and librarians must carefully review materials prior to use and exercise a high degree of professional judgment in their selection and use of supplemental materials.</p> <p>Please consider the following scenario: When providing practice in using a "Student" Dictionary or searching a site designated for their grade level , it is difficult to anticipate all sexually explicit words that might be found (or searched for) as students learn about and practice actually using them. A teacher or librarian can project a page from the dictionary or an internet site onto a screen for all to see, but it is not an authentic life experience if the lesson does not also include students actually practicing themselves in the time allotted. Teachers and librarians will naturally circulate around the room to assist students, but some students may never-the-less look for those words any chance they get.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who will create a form provided to list acquired supplementary materials? 2. Although reviews are available before the purchase of books/materials, time is needed to actually read/view these items upon delivery to determine suitability. As a former classroom teacher and librarian, I am concerned about the effects this 30 day requirement will have upon already overwhelmed teachers and librarians. The much needed additional time teachers/staff gained by reducing professional learning meetings, will now be used to only partially fulfill this added requirement. 3. In the case of teachers' classroom libraries which contain mostly paperback books (due to cost), inventory is constantly changing as materials have a short shelf life and curriculum changes are made. Depending upon the number of books purchased at the same time, reading them takes time. In reality, this might not be completed within 30 days. 4. In the case of librarians, who typically keep a running list of items to be purchased as funds are acquired, some orders consist of a hundred or more items. Items considered for purchase are based on staff and student requests, specific community interests, to add new releases by popular authors and series, and to complement curriculum. <p>There would be quite an extensive amount of time needed to read/view these new items and submit a list within 30 days. Videos are typically 30 minutes. Each individual book can take between 15 to 30 minutes to many hours to read, which is mostly done at home. Actually getting the books and materials processed and available for checkout takes a considerable amount of time, squeezed between interactions with students, staff, and parents and other responsibilities. The library is open for individual help and checkouts throughout the day.</p> <p>In my experience, in addition to ordering, processing, and maintaining a collection of materials and providing technology assistance, elementary librarians plan for and teach classes as part of the weekly "specials" rotation along with music, art, p.e. teachers and guidance counselors.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Librarians are trained professionals who take their responsibilities of providing for the needs of their students and staff seriously. | <p>It seems like it may take up to 100 days for the CRC and others involved to determine the outcome of a complaint. The school year is only 180 days... Scheduling the CRC meetings may be more burdensome than thought.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher, Librarian, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Thank you for allowing classroom teachers, librarians, and individual schools the liberty and autonomy to select supplemental materials. I recognize that a list of supplemental materials purchased needs to be provided to the principal/designee within 30 days and readily available to parents. How will this be organized? Who will be in charge? How will it be maintained and published? I fear that by requesting that classroom teachers also provide a list of supplemental materials purchased (most often purchased with personal funds) that this will discourage teachers from offering a classroom library at all. This creates inequity among the students who cannot afford to purchase their own books or do not have the means to frequent the public library.</p> | <p>The supplementary materials policy references various court cases that are not linked. Providing a link creates transparency and helps educate your residents on what you are basing your grounds/definitions of supplemental materials. In reading the court cases, it is evident that the committee deems plays/musicals as supplemental materials despite the fact that they are not listed in the definition provided. Should the policy list court cases that reference lewd nudity? The policy should be clear on the court's interpretations of the VA code in these cases. Sex, nudity, lewd nudity, and pornography should not be used synonymously.</p> | <p>I recommend that the statement that says, "The CRC will review the challenged supplementary materials..." should say, "The CRC will read the challenged supplementary material in its entirety during the review/reconsideration process..." How will the superintendent select the members for the CRC? I encourage you to balance the review committee. As it currently reads, there will be one librarian/teacher representative, the superintendent, supervisor of media services, three parents/community members, and one PAC (another parent). I suggest having additional teachers, as they are the primary curators of the resources being considered. This statement is concerning: "The School Board's decision will be final." This diminishes the need for the Content Review Committee and sides with whichever way the political winds blow.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Thank you for delegating the responsibility for the selection and use of supplemental materials to the individual schools in the county. As a former teacher/reading specialist in our school system I know that our student populations are widely diverse across the county and materials needed for learning can vary from school to school.</p> | <p>I agree with the criteria for selection of supplementary materials as well as the deselection of sexually explicit content in any of these materials. I like that teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of materials that they have purchased to the school's principal or designee and it will be available for parents and guardians to review within 30 days. Thank you very much for not stipulating when and how often librarians and teachers can purchase these supplemental materials.</p> | <p>I have no complaints or issues with this draft.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Thank you for including sexually explicit materials as a prohibited supplementary material.</p> | <p>I cannot thank you enough for clarifying what is and is not acceptable, in the area of sexual explicit material, to being available to our children in the school libraries. I also appreciate the sentence defending the parents' fundamental right in the education of our children.</p> | <p>Ninety days feels like a long time to wait for an answer, but I appreciate the process. Thank you again.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The additions to this policy make it clear that supplemental materials may only be used in the classroom or available in the classroom or library if they conform to the School Board and Virginia standards of decency, are age appropriate and used for academic education. I think this is an excellent policy.</p> | <p>This policy seems very reasonable and I like that a list of new supplemental materials will be made available to parents for their review. I wonder if it is possible for teachers and librarians to present to the principal a list of materials before purchasing them, so as not to waste money purchasing materials that the principal does not find meets the criteria. "Reviews from standard professional selection sources" - I would like to see this be more specific, as it appears that not all "standard professional selection sources" are sexually explicit and age appropriate sensitive.</p> | <p>I like this policy. It gives may people input into which materials are retained or removed but the final decision is with the school board, who as the elected officials it should be.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The additions you have made ("consistent with other School Board policies including School Board Policy IIABA,") project loud and clear that you do not trust the professionals that have been hired to be librarians and teachers in your school system. From what I have read in the local news, it appears that these policy changes you are seeking to make exist because of the list of 57 books that you pulled from libraries without reading them, following already existing procedure, or even being aware that many weren't even offered in your schools. Please be honest about where you got that list of books! As a member of the community, I am distraught at this framing of librarians and teachers as enemies, embracing of censorship, and politicization of your duty as school board members is going to do to retention of excellent teachers and librarians and hiring educators in the future.</p> | <p>I object to the way your revisions state that no materials may contain sexually explicit content. The Virginia Code 2.2-2827 would prohibit "any description of . . . sexual excitement, sexual conduct . . ." Determining what constitutes such descriptions is highly subjective. In building a collection that, as you say, "values the richness of diversity in our community and beyond" it is necessary to consider context and overall literary merit - not merely skim trying to find mentions of anything that one might construe as sexually explicit. Also, if this policy was not created by the educational professionals (librarians and teachers) who will need to implement it, please start over and seek their input.</p> | <p>Why is a separate complaint needed for sexually explicit material? Shouldn't the media complaint procedure already in place work? This revision seems to be aimed at stoking fear, anger, and mistrust among parents and educators when you should be striving for cooperation.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The board is inappropriately applying 2.2-2827, which has been applied to "instructional" material within the information infrastructure, defined as "telecommunications, cable, and computer networks and includes the Internet, the World Wide Web, Usenet, bulletin board systems, on-line systems, and telephone networks." Books are noticeably absent from this definition. SB235, which was intended to clarify this, was just vetoed by Governor Glenn Youngkin because he believed it to be redundant. This policy wrongly expands that definition to optional supplementary material. It is in direct contradiction with the statement made by Governor Youngkin that "Current law unequivocally affirms that the adoption of these model policies by a school board should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools." https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Vetoes-(1).pdf</p> | <p>Once again, the school board is inappropriately, wrongly, illegally applying 2.2-2827 to supplementary written material, as opposed to instructional material in the information infrastructure. This will exclude valuable works of literature that explore uncomfortable realities that affect children in our community, such as abuse, rape, harassment, peer pressure, romantic relationships, and even just their physical bodies and emotional health. Ignoring context with this blanket ban eliminates the opportunities for education, recognition, comfort, and survival for students suffering in those circumstances. The statement that "[s]upplementary materials do not exist to provide universal coverage" contradicts the stated goals of "valu[ing] the richness of diversity within our community", "reflect[ing] the various student populations", "supporting a variety of learning and teaching styles", and "supporting leisure reading among students." "Regularly" when referring to submissions of lists of supplementary materials is vague and subjective.</p> | <p>This is pure political theater. The definition of "sexually explicit" is once again being misapplied to optional supplementary written material, and artificially divides content complaints into two completely different procedures. There is no requirement that the parent or guardian submitting a complaint affirm that they have read the book, that the book is in a school or library where their own child has access to that book, or what their objection is. The review committee is selected by the superintendent alone, affording enormous opportunity for cherry-picking biased representatives. The recommendations of the committee are completely non-binding, which means for all intents and purposes, the school board makes the decisions, not this performative committee. The decisions then get applied to every school in the district, which means that a book considered inappropriate for an elementary school library must be pulled from high school libraries as well. You'd might as well just spell it out – the school board gets to decide what books are available, full stop, just as they have with their abhorrent, dictatorial decision to ban 57+ books from the libraries more than 3 months ago without oversight. This isn't oversight if they can ignore it.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The broadness of the definitions leaves those librarians and staff open to criticism to the point that they'll not feel comfortable suggesting anything.</p> | <p>Too ambiguous and leaves our teachers open to predation.</p> | <p>Quite the arduous process for book banning. Perhaps instead of people filing complaints on "sexually explicit materials" in school they should place more focus on what their kids are using their cell phones for.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The changes set forth provide a wide scope to which the material will be examined. I like that Librarians are also included in the review process and not subjected to one teacher's opinion. Plus, the definition for "sexually explicit" is defined under a known standard and not an subjective opinion of the teacher or principle.</p> | <p>In my reading of the proposal, the standards of openness, learning and fairness seem to not limit the ideas available. The use of such a wide range would give the students and teachers access to that vast array of ideas by which to learn the various sides of a topic or issue. The idea that parents need to survey the list of submissions is great, but I feel the teacher should give the parents sometime to look at what was added before that material is used in the class. Example: Mr Teacher submits his supplementary list appropriately for next weeks class schedule, but Mr Teacher doesn't inform his students parent list of these additions. Class happens and many parents find out too late for any rebuttal. Now, I may have not understood the 30 day review process to which Mr Teacher will be using this material after the 30 days. If that is the case, that should be sufficient time for the objections to be spoken. I think there should be some communication with the parent that additions were made to the list so they are made aware.</p> | <p>All procedures for rebuttal, forms to file, who sees them, who decides what, and who ultimately make the final decision seem a good failsafe for rash and snap reactions. I do wish communication with the objecting party as their complaint progresses would be somehow included. The IIABB-F is short (which is great), but does lack a bit on direct contact of the submitter. With the principle filling out the form with the objector, best phone number to reach you and/or email address would be a great addition.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>The Commonwealth of VA defines nudity under the statute identified as: (2) "Nudity" means a state of undress so as to expose the human male or female genitals, pubic area or buttocks with less than a full opaque covering, or the showing of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering of any portion thereof below the top of the nipple, or the depiction of covered or uncovered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state.</p> <p>How would your policy not interfere with the study of Art, Art History, the Renaissance, etc? The policy is deliberately vague, but it does not address this issue.</p> <p>How does this differ from the Commonwealth's requirement that all sexually explicit materials in the classroom be notated for parental review?</p> | <p>"Teachers and librarians shall not acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplementary material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content."</p> <p>Does this include Poetry that is already part of the curriculum? What about the collected works of William Shakespeare which are inherently bawdy, and include sexually explicit references?</p> <p>This gives broad censorship powers to the School Board to censor a wide selection of media. As a resident, voter & tax-payer - this is unacceptable. The School Board should work WITH stakeholders - parents, librarians, educators to have oversight over media used in the classroom, but not be the sole decider.</p> <p>An item being sexually explicit is in the eye of the beholder, and you are using a format that is extremely subjective as opposed to being objective. Even the definitions from Virginia statutes that are cited are open to interpretation in an academic setting.</p> | <p>"The School Board will make the final decision by instructing the principal to retain, modify, or remove the challenged supplementary material. The School Board's decision will apply to all schools within Rockingham County Public Schools, not just the school from where the complaint originated."</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The form does NOT specifically state that the challenger be a parent or guardian of a RCPS student. The policy states that point, but the form DOES NOT. 2. Essentially one singular parent could file a complaint form & have material removed that effects ALL RCPS students regardless of usage, age appropriateness, etc. |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>The current policies to review books that parents are concerned about are a thorough and well established set of policies and do NOT need changing or replacement. In addition there is already an option for a student to not read a material upon a parents request. So we are covered. We don't need these proposed changes. In fact, these proposed policies from the new school board are unnecessary and a cover for the school board to try to control materials kids have access to that are anything different from the school board's conservative Christian world view. I don't want these new draft policies for our schools or my children.</p> | <p>Blanket deselection of materials PREVENTS parents from making the decision for their own children and allows others to make that decision for them. This is definitely NOT giving parents rights. We have the technical means to allow parents to restrict library materials for THEIR OWN CHILDREN currently in place. Publicizing this ability and making it easy for parents to use the current system actually allows parents to control their own children's exposure better than the proposed decision by a few.</p> | <p>Separate procedures for materials challenged for sexually explicit content and materials challenged for other reasons are both confusing and set multiple standards. IIAC asks the complainant if they have read the entire work, are aware of professional review, what they think is the purpose of the book, while IIABB-F has the complainant list a passage with no context or consideration of the work as a whole. Requiring teachers to report all supplemental materials to the school board is an attack on teacher's professionalism and will create a toxic work environment. "Supplementary materials shall be considered for their educational suitability and shall not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." The prohibition on sexually explicit content regardless of context is actually both partisan and doctrinal disapproval</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>The definition of sexually explicit material is not acceptable and needs to be removed. There must be a clear discussion of context when describing sexually explicit material or any book will be removed and subject to this ridiculous process</p> | <p>There are multiple issues with this proposed policy which I believe was copied partially from another school district, not our own in Rockingham even though according to the school board opinions outside of Rockingham county do not matter at all. So why copy this from another school board? Inappropriate. The entire policy should be rewritten using Rockingham county librarians input throughout it. There does not appear to be librarian input in this. Finally, once the policy is rewritten to include expert librarian input, the line stating that the school board has final say must be removed. That indicates that the parents and experts who work to give their opinion and actually read the material do not matter and it is simply government tyrant from big-government minded individuals who will override the policies and work of anybody else they disagree with. As members of the board have already stated negative opinions on minorities, and the chair stated the Bible would never be removed it is very possible the board is going to use this to further viewpoint discrimination in my opinion. I am surprised the lawyer and superintendent for RCPS is okay with this.</p> | <p>Again, the entire policy must be rewritten to include actual feedback from librarians and not just the person opinion of the school board</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The definition of sexually explicit should require that work be considered as a whole. These policies are focused on restriction of knowledge and education.</p> | <p>Requiring teachers to report all supplemental materials undermines teacher professionalism and training. It will create a toxic work environment that will make it more difficult to maintain and hire teachers. This seems to allow for some parents to determine what all children have access to. It undermines the fundamental rights of many parents for the views of a few. These policies are focused on restriction of knowledge (the opposite of aiding students in research) and education. They are directly opposed to the promotion of critical thinking skills.</p> | <p>The CRC lacks teacher input. This allows for some parents to determine what all children have access to. It undermines the fundamental rights of many parents for the views of a few. The process again fails to consider context, merit, or the material as a whole. The definition of sexually explicit should require that work be considered as a whole.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>The definition of supplementary materials is very unclear. You say that it is non-instructional material, but then mention about use of them in class, which would be instructional. I would like a very clear definition of what the board means regarding supplementary materials.</p> | <p>The policy claims to include diversity, current writings, and to support leisure reading among students. A non-negotiable in English curriculum is to include 20 minutes of SSR each class which is to give students choice in what they read. It appears that a disproportionate number of the books already temporarily removed focus on one aspect, not all are sexually explicit, and some are ones that students are requesting to read (even before the removal) and making it difficult to support that leisure reading in class.</p> | <p>It is unclear what the point of the CRC is if the school board is going to say that it is the ultimate authority. Regardless of what the superintendent says, or any other parents, or involved personnel who have taken the time to thoroughly review the book and the reasons it is challenge, the school board can decide of its own accord whether or not it can be included in schools. This seems to defeat the purpose of a committee.</p> |
| <p>Administrator, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The draft is self-explanatory and eliminates unnecessary text from the public school system. Students should not have access to explicit materials as sensitive content conversations are parental responsibilities.</p> | <p>Allowing parents access to material lists is appropriate and promotes transparency. Having guidance for supplemental materials provides parameters for acceptable text.</p> | <p>Appreciate the option to allow parents to submit concern with a concrete means of making a determination based on the objective review of other personnel.</p> <p>Unrelated to this particular draft, we, as a society, are subjected to ratings in various media. The videos students watch in school, and in public, are based on ratings determined to be appropriate for viewing by age/grade. Video games that students play are rated for content, and parents should adhere to this guidance when allowing their children access. TV and movies are rated to serve the same purpose. Written text incorporated into our public school system should have a similar standard and content deemed permissible should align with the developmental age/grade of students.</p> |

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| <p>Staff member, Teacher</p> | <p>The edits made to this policy are very clear and concise. I have no problems with this draft.</p> | <p>I have massive concerns about this section of the drafted policy: Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials: Teachers and librarians will regularly submit a list of supplementary materials that they have selected and acquired for their classroom library or school library to the school principal or designee. The list will be available for all parents or guardians to review within thirty (30) days of selection.</p> <p>I have absolutely no problem with sharing the books that I have in my classroom library, as I feel totally confident in the value they bring to my students. BUT this comes from someone who HAS ALREADY created a document that outlines all of the chapter books in my classroom library (roughly 80%, estimating about 750 books) and can vouch that it took me MONTHS to create a useable, informative document. I can see teachers (who have similar to more experience than I have at 11 years) who will just close their personal classroom libraries instead of take the time to create something like is being asked of classroom teachers, which is a waste of money for the schools and individuals who purchased books for students to have free choice in reading. A requirement of this nature would create hours, if not days & weeks, of additional workload to a teacher's already overflowing plate. Wouldn't it be a better use of that adults time to plan and create meaningful lessons instead of creating a list like this? I'm not sure if I would be willing to take on that task right now in my career if I didn't already have a document of this nature. It is my opinion that if a parent or guardian is interested in knowing what options their child has to read in their child's classroom, they should be invited into the classroom to view the library in person. I understand wanting to give parents and guardians more information and reassurance about books being provided as supplemental materials, but at what cost to the mental health and workload of the staff member who would be required to take on that additional workload, along with the additional workload this creates for building principals to monitor?</p> | <p>This policy outlines the clear process of all involved persons to follow and makes it clear each part of the review process. I have no problems with this draft.</p> |

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| Rockingham County Resident | The intent of this document to draw a line between supplementary materials and those used for instructional purpose, but this is not well executed. By very definition of 'supplement' means to add to. And while I understand that the division here is between what is 'taught' in a class setting, and what is 'learned' via further reading or parallel study for assignment, pleasure, or purely on accident, I think the policy does a poor job distinguishing the two. This is likely to cause more confusion than it solves. | This policy is flawed in several respects (an emphasis on an "all sides" presentation, etc.), however the one I'm going to point out here is the absolute prohibition on procuring content with sexual explicit content. While on the face of it that feels like something that should be avoided, there are certainly times where that content is age appropriate, topic appropriate, and also difficult to excise given academic standards we are trying to uphold for our kids. The way this is written would limit most of the works of Shakespeare, Philip Roth, John Updike, Saul Bellow, Kurt Vonnegut, J.D. Salinger, Kerouac, George Sand, George Elliot, and others. Poems by Auden, Pound, Oliver, Plath and more would be out of circulation. Most major works of religion would be out as they nearly all contain reference to human sexuality. | These guidelines are a mess generally. Certainly not clear, nor do they set real guidelines re the academic justification around the selection and use of supplementary materials; this appears to be more about ceding to the demands of activist parents who don't want their kids to learn about a given subject. Whether that subject is reproduction, history, social science, biology, the environment, or geology matters not - this offers a pathway to oppose areas of study and exploration. This sets up a huge bureaucratic system that enables anyone to challenge the content available for any reason. Furthermore it sets up a messy and unclear hierarchy within the administration where power is increasingly centralized at the board level. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | The plan sounds good to me. | I'm glad to hear that staff of RCPS is keeping an extra eye on what students can get a hold of while at school. | Parents also need to aide in the assistance of this, and keep a carefully eye on what their students are bring to school. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | The policies set forth in this draft show that the board has already ignored feedback from parents, teachers, librarians, and administrators. Library books and classroom libraries are not the same as instructional materials, supplemental or otherwise. | Banning or "temporarily removing" books from the libraries on the basis of "explicit material" creates a gray area that allows a small group of individuals more power than the parents and trained professionals to whom we entrust our children's education. | There is too much space for subjective, knee-jerk reactivity. These policies clearly are not in the best interests of our children. They give too much power to the board and ignore parents' rights, stifle creativity and artistic freedom, and ultimately harm our children. |
| Parent/Guardian | The policy appears to address standards for review of objectionable materials for student instruction as well as an orderly process for reporting. | I am pleased to see that there is a process for selecting age-appropriate materials for students. Although I trust that current staff of RCPS schools have the best interest in mind for all ages, it has necessitated these guidelines to insure all that this is being done. | Although lengthy, this appears to be a clear, concise process for review of challenged materials. |
| Parent/Guardian | The policy as written is quite vague, which would allow unnecessary censorship of reading, audio, and video materials. I am in support of teachers and librarians choosing age appropriate materials with the least amount of rules and censorship, and the most latitude possible. Children should not have restrictions imposed upon their choice of materials. | I read the state law and the school board proposed language. While many adults would favor restricting access by minors of sexually explicit content, this restriction has recently been taken too far. Much like the movie ratings guides, I favor age appropriate materials. I see nothing wrong with books containing stories about LGBTQIA+ characters and the context of their lives. Representation matters. Reading about a gay character will not make a child gay who is not already gay, but it might save a gay child's life to read about a character like them. | Banning books is never a good idea. Ever. If a parent has an issue with a book then that parent can disallow their own student to read that particular book. That parent, nor anyone else, should be making decisions to ban books from all of the other students. I am absolutely against banning books. |
| Rockingham County Resident | The policy grants total power of veto to the school board to determine what is "sexually explicit" material. Given recent decisions of the board, little thought, research and profession credentials or reading the entire book will factor into the best decisions for student reading. | This policy refuses to grant professional certified librarians to guide decision making. When the Superintendent, two teachers, and three parents/community members compile the banned (or deselected) book list, the School Board refuses what should be best practice, allowing the credentialed professionals, the librarians, to have the largest voice in the process and decisions made for students. | Once again, only the School Board has the final veto power after procedures have been followed. I will neither ask or expect you, without credentials and licensing (which all teachers must have to be hired), to make curriculum or teaching decisions, nor will I ask you to perform heart surgery on me or my children. Be professional and do your job, which should be to respect and encourage the professionals working with you. Good leaders do not undermine the confidence of those they were elected to supervise. |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The policy in place was appropriate.</p> | <p>This gives the board the ultimate power to limit an materials it deems "sexually explicit" despite the fact that the law cited was not intended to be used as pretense for censorship or banning books. It takes the decision making process out of the hands of trained experts who literally have degrees in library science that gives them extensive training in book selection and following appropriate laws, policies and procedures .</p> | <p>The challenge process for "supplementary materials" is again taken out of the hands of trained professionals in RCPS and into the hands of untrained (and currently politically biased) elected officials.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>The policy is straightforwardly stating that teachers and librarians are responsible for vetting the materials they use in class. This is appropriate. People who have never been in a classroom shouldn't be in control of curriculum. Educators with degrees and curriculum knowledge are qualified to do that; let them do their jobs.</p> | <p>Your Sexually Explicit Content rule focuses mainly on removing books where protagonists are members of the LGBTQ+ community. Silencing this community of learners is NOT "Empowering ALL Learners" like your philosophy states. You are not accomplishing your mission by telling a group of your population that their voices don't belong.</p> | <p>As mentioned above, your censorship of LGBTQ+ and minority voices under the guise of supporting and "Empowering ALL Learners" is silencing voices who need to be heard the most while telling them their stories don't matter or add to the community of the school. This also takes access away from students who would like to expand their knowledge, so this policy is a disservice to the entire student population.</p> <p>Consider empathy and stop being so close-minded.</p> |

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| <p>Librarian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The prohibition of all supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content as defined in the Virginia Code 2.2 2827 is quite restrictive. Depending on how one defines "lewd", "description", "acts", and "apparent sexual stimulation and gratification", this prohibition could result in record setting numbers of books being banned in Rockingham County. This is concerning on a number of levels:</p> <p>There are many books that are beneficial to a wide range of students that would be pulled in a strict interpretation of this code. Additionally, some titles required for AP Literature and Dual Enrollment English as well as many titles on the AP, SAT, and ACT suggested reading lists will be removed. Students deserve access to these titles.</p> <p>This policy may be used by some groups to target classic literature, works with significant historical value, and religious works. A fairly moderate reading of the Virginia Code would make successful challenges along these lines likely.</p> <p>Language addressing the caution and care the board desires be paid to sexually explicit materials could be included, as has been done in many of the model policies the board initially shared, and could avoid many or all of these pitfalls.</p> <p>I also fear the backlash from the broader media and the negative attention on the national stage that banning a huge number of books will bring. It has been challenging to work in the library and live in our community during this time, and I hope for a policy that puts this to rest rather than garnering additional attention which drains our teachers, distracts our students, and detracts from the important work for our leaders.</p> | <p>The "Criteria For Selection" section reads to me that all the criteria be followed for the selection process. If it is the intent that all selection criteria be followed, the "Reference to the Massanutten Regional Library age classification" would present a challenge if we are acquiring materials that are not part of the regional library's collection. This could easily be the case because of the breadth and currency of our selections. This is also true of the "Primary sources" requirements. This could be addressed by making it clear that "applicable" or "a variety" of criteria from the list should be used.</p> <p>The statement, "Teachers and librarians shall not acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplemental material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content." is concerning. This leaves no room for teachers or librarians to make an honest mistake. As written, a teacher or librarian who, in good faith, purchases a supplementary material he or she believes is free from sexually explicit content would be in violation of policy and in jeopardy of termination should that material prove to actually contain anything that could be interpreted as sexually explicit. This puts teachers and librarians in the extremely challenging situation where they will have to pre read all materials before purchase. This would significantly hamper both teachers' and librarians' abilities to purchase adequate materials to meet the needs of their students. This could easily be mitigated by the inclusion of the word "purposefully" or "knowingly" as in, "Teachers and librarians shall not knowingly acquire or select for their classroom libraries and school libraries any supplemental material, regardless of format, that contains sexually explicit content."</p> <p>As alluded to in the response to the first question, specific exceptions to the definition of sexually explicit content for works that are historically significant, works of classic literature, works of artistic significance, and works with significant educational value etc. would prevent this policy from restricting student access to academically relevant materials. The state's definition of sexually explicit content is designed to set a standard for parents to remain informed when their student(s) are being required to access materials with sexual content. As Governor Youngkin has alluded to, it was not intended to eliminate student access to all materials that fall under it.</p> | <p>Under procedural point 3 for the Supplementary Materials Complaint Procedure, it might be helpful to say, "the principal or assistant principal" unless the legal language considers an assistant principal to be a principal by definition.</p> |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The proposed clause prohibiting "sexually explicit content" in the libraries of Rockingham County Public Schools is intended by the current Board majority to ban (euphemism: "deselect") student access to works of art and information that this Board disapproves. This Board majority is seeking to prevent students from accessing materials that could help them explore their identities, open up their realms of possibilities, and better understand one another's humanity. For many students, school is a place to grow beyond the restrictive, narrow confines of their parents' worlds. Public schools are delegated by ALL the voters with "in loco parentis" powers to help students achieve their own identities and goals, not limited by their parents' imaginations, or lack of imaginations.</p> <p>This proposed policy's reference to Virginia Code § 2.2-2827, "Restrictions on state employee access to information infrastructure" is misguided. This Virginia code is in place to keep State employees from wasting time "on the clock" perusing pornography for their own personal interest.</p> <p>Public school libraries, by contrast, exist to provide students with opportunities to expand their worlds beyond home and school and locality, and to attract them into a lifetime of reading for personal information and pleasure, above and beyond their coursework. Works of literary art sometimes include material that may drily be defined as "sexually explicit" as part of their artistry and/or their message. Sexuality is a basic part of being human. This current School Board majority disapproves such works precisely to appeal to right-wing constituents who fear kids discovering the wider worlds of art and authentic explorations and expressions of their identity.</p> <p>I urge the Board to leave the process of selecting books and other supplementary materials to professional librarians and teachers, "in loco parentis." Current policies afford opportunities to activist parents to challenge materials they disapprove, which they don't want their own kids to access. Let those parents use the tools already provided.</p> <p>The respondent is a Rockingham County, Virginia resident and parent of two alumni of thirteen years each in Rockingham County Public Schools.</p> | <p>This proposed policy states, "Through the selection and deselection of these materials, it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." This gives the lie to the statement at the top of the proposed policy: "The Rockingham County School Board is committed to the philosophy of "Empowering ALL Learners"."</p> <p>If this policy is enacted, it will have the effect of further DISempowering learners whose parents do not understand them; learners who are not privileged freely to visit bookstores, larger public libraries, or to browse online. "Deselection" (a euphemism for banning) of materials which this current School Board disapproves means banning students from access to ideas and resources that could save their lives and help them on their paths to a better life than their families can imagine. Please drop this needless, restrictive, new policy.</p> <p>Please instead fulfill this claim, "to further enrich student learning by ... promoting critical thinking skills."</p> <p>[I repeat here the following, which was part of my response to the proposed changes to Policy IIAB, in case my responses get separated from each other:]</p> <p>This proposed policy's reference to Virginia Code § 2.2-2827, "Restrictions on state employee access to information infrastructure" is misguided. This Virginia code is in place to keep State employees from wasting time "on the clock" perusing pornography for their own personal interest.</p> <p>Public school libraries, by contrast, exist to provide students with opportunities to expand their worlds beyond home and school and locality, and to attract them into a lifetime of reading for personal information and pleasure, above and beyond their coursework. Works of literary art sometimes include material that may drily be defined as "sexually explicit" as part of their artistry and/or their message. Sexuality is a basic part of being human. This current School Board majority disapproves such works precisely to appeal to right-wing constituents who fear kids discovering the wider worlds of art and authentic explorations and expressions of their identity.</p> <p>I urge the Board to leave the process of selecting books and other supplementary materials to professional librarians and teachers, "in loco parentis." Current policies afford opportunities to activist parents to challenge materials they disapprove, which they don't want their own kids to access. Let those parents use the tools already provided.</p> <p>The respondent is a Rockingham County, Virginia resident and parent of two alumni of thirteen years each in Rockingham County Public Schools.</p> | <p>Proposed policy IIABB is completely unnecessary. Current policy IIAC provides ample opportunity for parents or guardians of RCPS Students to object to materials in our schools. The main point of this proposed policy IIABB is to excite those right-wing constituents who want to ban (euphemism: "deselect") materials because they deal with human sexuality in ways they personally disapprove.</p> <p>The current policy IIAC gives families all the tools they need, to challenge materials they don't like. Please do not adopt this unhelpful new policy.</p> <p>[I repeat here the following, which was part of my response to the proposed changes to Policy IIAB, in case my responses get separated from each other:]</p> <p>This proposed policy's reference to Virginia Code § 2.2-2827, "Restrictions on state employee access to information infrastructure" is misguided. This Virginia code is in place to keep State employees from wasting time "on the clock" perusing pornography for their own personal interest.</p> <p>Public school libraries, by contrast, exist to provide students with opportunities to expand their worlds beyond home and school and locality, and to attract them into a lifetime of reading for personal information and pleasure, above and beyond their coursework. Works of literary art sometimes include material that may drily be defined as "sexually explicit" as part of their artistry and/or their message. Sexuality is a basic part of being human.</p> <p>This current School Board majority disapproves such works precisely to appeal to right-wing constituents who fear kids discovering the wider worlds of art and authentic explorations and expressions of their identity.</p> <p>The respondent is a Rockingham County, Virginia resident and parent of two alumni of thirteen years each in Rockingham County Public Schools.</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian | The proposed revisions are in line with the best interest of RCPS. Thank you for your hard work school board! | The proposed revisions are in line with the best interest of RCPS. Thank you for your hard work school board! | The proposed revisions are in line with the best interest of RCPS. Thank you for your hard work school board! |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | The revisions of the current School Board Policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials provides teachers and staff with guidelines, along with autonomy on offering supplemental materials in their classrooms. It also keeps children safe from being exposed to inappropriate material without parental awareness or consent. | The School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection is another policy to keep children safe from being exposed to inappropriate or sexually explicate material. Parents and guardians should know what materials are offered to their child(ren) and this policy provides transparency. | The School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials provides opportunity for those seeking to use particular materials to state the reason why. It also seeks to protect children from the harm of sexually explicate material and transparency for parents and guardians. |
| Teacher | The revisions to Policy IIAB will make it more difficult to reach my students. Removing library materials if they fail a litmus test of sexual content denies the lived experiences of our student body. Forcing each book through this narrow hoop rejects the needs of students to see themselves in what they read. Students need access to books where they see characters like themselves overcome difficult and challenging situations. In the hands of a skillful, compassionate, and wise author, characters who face difficulties can grow and change - and so can the readers who journey with them. Not all challenges are appropriate for all readers, but denying that these challenges are already the lived experience of some students, including challenges of a sexual nature for some students, makes it that much more difficult for me to reach those students where they are. | The Supplementary Materials Selection policy, if applied as it is currently written, will hinder my ability to do my job in the best service of my students. To be clear, I do not teach materials that include sexually explicit content. However, when selecting books for my classroom library, I use many criteria, including age appropriateness and quality of content. Strictly applying this new policy to the library will have me instead spending time second-guessing whether simple sentences such as, "We made out," can be interpreted as "sexual conduct;" or whether allusions as mild as "wolf whistling," can be interpreted as "sexual excitement" under policy IIA. Should those be enough to disqualify a book? Should things that are mildly more risqué be enough? This policy takes that discernment of what may appropriately engage my students out of my hands and places it into the hands of people who do not know my students at all. The definitions of School Board Policy IIA on Sexually Explicit Materials can be interpreted and applied in many ways, but the message sent by Policy IIABA is that the strictest interpretation must be applied. Its strict application will gut our libraries and our instruction. | A challenge policy which removes books system-wide ignores the obvious differences between grade level, location, and educational needs across the division. |
| Rockingham County Resident | The rewrite of the policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials looks good to me. | IIABA - The Supplementary Materials Selection rewrite looks good. | The complaint procedure looks thorough and reasonable. |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The sexually explicit content described in Virginia Code 2.2-2827 was written in regards to the prevention of state employees misusing their work computers to access sexually stimulating content while they were working. This has NOTHING to do with books or instructional materials that are offered in our schools. This school board has provided zero evidence of parental complaints in regards to the books that have been removed. Along with that, there are existing policies in place if parents do not want their child to have access to specific books. Members of this school board have been vocal about their personal beliefs in regards to books in the past and now that they are in office, have used their position to force their beliefs on everyone else in the schools.</p> <p>In regards to SB 656, it is being taken out of context by this school board who is blatantly ignoring the final sentence which reads, "The bill states that the provisions of the bill shall not be construed as requiring or providing for the censoring of books in public elementary and secondary schools."</p> <p>Also, the decision of this school board to remove 57 books from our county schools is an enormous waste of taxpayer money. What is the dollar amount of all the books that have been removed and what will be the dollar amount of the future books that they are planning to remove?</p> <p>This school board behaves as if these books have the same sexual content as copies of Playboy or Hustler magazines. NO ONE would advocate for those magazines to be in our schools. NO ONE. There is a vast difference between the explicit adult pornography in those magazines and the written words in literature. This board doesn't seem to understand the literary value of the books that they have removed. It is clear that this board is intentionally removing books that would help students with their empathy for people who are different than them and with their critical thinking skills. The impact on students will reverberate for years and will have a negative impact on many college bound students.</p> | <p>This school board can try to reframe this as "deselection" all they want but it's quite clear that they are BANNING books but do not want to admit to what they are doing by calling it what it is.</p> <p>The sexually explicit content described in Virginia Code 2.2-2827 was written in regards to the prevention of state employees misusing their work computers to access sexually stimulating content while they were working. This has NOTHING to do with books or instructional materials that are offered in our schools.</p> <p>In regards to SB 656, it is being taken out of context by this school board who is blatantly ignoring the final sentence which reads, "The bill states that the provisions of the bill shall not be construed as requiring or providing for the censoring of books in public elementary and secondary schools."</p> | <p>The words and actions of this school board in the few months they have been in office leads me to feel that this Content Review Committee will be made up only of other individuals whose beliefs are exactly the same as their own. It is also clear that if the school board disagrees with any decision made by the Content Review Committee they will override them and ban books that have been approved by the committee. This leads me to believe that this school board is creating the Content Review Committee for appearances sake only. Members of this school board have publicly stated that they will not change their minds on their stance in regards to the ban of these books. This means that no amount of expert recommendations or complaints from teachers/librarians/parents/county residents will change their minds. This makes it quite clear they these board members are not open to hearing what other people think or feel. This makes it clear that this board does not value the community or their thoughts on the matter. This makes it clear that this board does not value it's teachers and librarians. This also makes it completely crystal clear that this board is doing this solely based on their own personal beliefs and that this decision is not based on factual evidence.</p> <p>The sexually explicit content described in Virginia Code 2.2-2827 was written in regards to the prevention of state employees misusing their work computers to access sexually stimulating content while they were working. This has NOTHING to do with books or instructional materials that are offered in our schools.</p> <p>In regards to SB 656, it is being taken out of context by this school board who is blatantly ignoring the final sentence which reads, "The bill states that the provisions of the bill shall not be construed as requiring or providing for the censoring of books in public elementary and secondary schools."</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The statement prohibiting sexually explicit materials should be removed. By making teachers and librarians responsible for the selection and use of supplementary materials then stating that "sexually explicit" content is prohibited implies that school personnel will be disciplined if "sexually explicit" materials are found within their collections. With the "sexually explicit" determination being made exclusively by the school board this is likely to result in multiple personnel hearings and ultimately lawsuits as legal bodies other than the school board evaluate the "sexually explicit" determination. Teachers and librarians should be responsible for the timely removal of any "sexually explicit" materials, but they cannot be the responsible for the presence of such materials. Would a librarian be held responsible for prohibited materials that were left by a student? Ultimately, the last sentence should be removed from the final draft of the policy.</p> | <p>Similar to my comments for Policy IIAB. Teachers and librarians cannot be expected to comply with the "sexually explicit" determination that can be made arbitrarily by the school board. Clearly stating the selection criteria is all that is required. Similarly personnel cannot be expected to deselect based on the perceived whims of the school board. Deselection must originate with a parent; it should not become of point of disagreement between the board and personnel. The monetary costs associated with these disagreements could quickly become problematic.</p> <p>The notification of acquired materials seems reasonable, but it should include where the list will be available for review. Having the recent acquisitions in the office of the school seems to be the only way to ensure that parents and guardians are the ones who can review the documentation. It should not be posted on school websites since the intent is for parents and guardians to review the list not the general public who have no standing under the policy as written.</p> <p>Parents should have the ability to limit student access to all supplementary materials for THEIR children. Individual librarians may be able to manage specific limitations, but I am fine with an opt in process where supplementary material is completely unavailable unless the parent or guardian allows, in writing, access to the school collections. This effectively allows parents to ban all books for their children if they wish while also empowering parents who desire unrestricted academic freedom. Parents should make decisions for their children; not all children in the school system. Similarly, the board has a legal responsibility to make materials available even if only a small number of parents desire them. If the board's interpretation of sexually explicit is not managed carefully, individual students may have standing for legal action.</p> <p>I feel that any work that is used as part of instruction at a particular institution must be available to some extent in the school's supplementary materials. At least one of the titles in the list of currently withdrawn materials was part of a graded assignment for one of my children last year. If it's part of an approved curriculum, you must have the materials available.</p> | <p>The sexually explicit content complaint procedure is unnecessary. A standard complaint form and process is far more appropriate. Furthermore, a decision made for a particular selection should not apply to the entire school system but for all elementary, middle, or high schools where the work is found. As written, collections would have to be appropriate for seniors and kindergarteners.</p> <p>The "Supplementary Materials Complaint Procedure" is far more manageable than the "Sexually Explicit Content Complaint Procedure" as parents are restricted to a single complaint that works through the local system instead of transferring directly to the county level. As written, a single parent could challenge the entire collection of a schools library and require evaluation by the CRC and board. Furthermore, there should be a period of time between possible challenges.</p> <p>It should be clearly stated that materials will remain available during all review processes.</p> <p>Forms should be accepted from only parents or guardians, and the work must be in the collection where the child attends. This is in compliance with the policy as written.</p> |
| <p>Staff member, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The Supplementary Materials policy was clear the way it was previously worded.</p> | <p>No teacher should have to catalog every piece of reading material in their classroom. School staff are highly educated to select age and reading level appropriate materials. Teachers and librarians need to be respected and not policed.</p> | <p>If a parent or guardian has a problem with their child reading a particular book, they should have that discussion with their child. No one should have the right to police an entire district based on their own preferences.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The term "sexually explicit content" as defined in the Virginia Code §2.2-2827 seems inappropriate in a policy related to school or classroom library books. Many works of literature that have become important parts of the canon include references to sex or nudity that are meaningful to the work's overall message. This definition would require removal of many books from our shelves that appear on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate reading lists. A policy like this one will limit my children's opportunities to learn and compete against students from other school divisions that value wide reading and intellectual rigor.</p> | <p>The bulleted points listed in the Rockingham County School Board's mission to empower all learners (● Creating a caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity within our community and beyond;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting the Virginia Standards of Learning; ● Supporting all curricular areas with a collection that is current; ● Supporting each school's reading program; ● Providing a balanced collection reflecting various points of view; ● Aiding students in research and study; ● Promoting critical thinking skills; ● Providing materials on a wide range of ability levels, chosen to reflect the various student populations; ● Providing instruction and professional support for teachers, administrators, and staff; ● Supporting a variety of learning and teaching styles; ● Supporting leisure reading among students) <p>seem to be in direct conflict with the school board's intent to limit access to school and classroom library books. Again, many works of literature that have become important parts of the canon include references to sex or nudity that are meaningful to the work's overall message.</p> | <p>According to this school board "it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." Parents of students enrolled in Rockingham County Public Schools already have many effective ways to be aware of and choose what their children can and cannot read from school and classroom libraries. Not only can I see what my children check out and search for at school, but I can also work directly with librarians, teachers, and administrators to express my concerns and limit what my children access. This drafted policy takes away my parental control and places it in the hands of other parents. I wholeheartedly disagree that other parents should police my children's reading and learning.</p> |

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| <p>Librarian</p> | <p>The term supplementary materials needs to be delineated as part of this document. If supplementary materials are to include all items that any teacher uses at any time to help obtain the objectives of the course content, then this would seem to be too vast to be "doable" by teachers, assistants, or librarians. It would mean even a map, globe, magazine, museum pamphlet, etc. would all need to be submitted and approved by the administrator of each school. This would be a daunting task for all concerned and would lead to many faculty and staff members purging their rooms of anything outside of their adopted textbooks. This would make many classrooms and learning spaces to be rudimentary and not allowing for creativity or much differentiation when teaching.</p> | <p>In the selection of supplemental materials, the suitability to each class, each grade level, and each school varies. It also varies from year to year. We have a fluid and changing makeup of students who come and go throughout the school year. Many times, students come or leave with little or no notice beforehand. This is my thirty-second year with RCPS and our diversity as to where students are coming from and their learning levels is growing. As a result, our libraries, classroom libraries, and supplemental materials are also getting more and more diverse to meet students where they are and to address their backgrounds and help them to feel belonging and ownership in their classes and the school library.</p> <p>As teachers and professionals working daily with a classroom up to a full school, we do need specifics and they need to be clearly stated as to what constitutes "sexually explicit content." Also, will it be the same criteria across all grade levels?</p> <p>As a school librarian, I do include a list on all purchase orders to be approved already of what I am purchasing. When selecting materials to supplement our curriculum and for student self-selection for items to check out, we school library teachers also consult several professional reviews as to the level and the content and the interest and whether it is for our school population or not. Teachers also select books and supplemental items with the same criteria in mind, but for them to locate and read through professional reviews for every book they obtain for their classroom and to report on anything new they purchase or bring in to use with their classes would require hours and hours added to their already taxed load. Many teachers (of all subjects and all classes) already spend hours each week beyond what is spent at school. I have heard many teachers (and I am at the elementary level) stating that if they need to report on each small purchase they use to help with teaching, they will stop with locating and using/purchasing any supplemental materials and will not even have a classroom library accessible to their students. This breaks my heart. It will make school feel less like a warm, accepting, fun, safe, and creative place to learn and grow and more like some sort of sterile institution. This would not be optimal for anyone involved.</p> | <p>My first question is who will comprise the Content Review Committee and how often will it change? Will it involve teachers, librarians, and parents? Will this committee be sure to have on it parents and teachers who are at the level (elementary, middle school, or high school) of the item being reviewed? How will the committee members be chosen and by whom?</p> <p>When I started working in RCPS back in 1992 there already existed a process for whenever a complaint was made about a book or item being used to teach. Part of the process was to ask the complainant to first speak with the teacher or the librarian. That is, anyone with a complaint or concern was asked to first go to where the item in question came from. At the school level, upon speaking with the teacher or librarian and the school administrator, if the complainant wasn't okay with what was decided during the meeting, they filled out a formal complaint form and the complaint was then taken to a school committee. Upon the recommendation of the school committee (meeting after each member present read the material/book/etc. in its entirety) if the complainant was not happy with the consensus of the school level committee, it then went to a county level committee. What was deemed inadequate about the existing process? Why are there now no steps to first go to the source at the school level and to go through the reconsideration process first at the school level and see if all parties can reach a consensus?</p> <p>Even as far back as my first few years in RCPS as a fourth and later a second grade teacher, I would let families know what books we would be reading and would address any concerns and be ready to suggest and offer alternative titles that suited the same themes. My daughters both went through RCPS schools from K-12 and I appreciated this as a parent myself. As a teacher and a parent and a librarian, I am not at all opposed to families requesting their own child read or not read a specific author or book. As a librarian if I am made known of this, I make sure to note it in the check out system so that whenever the student comes to check out, a note appears letting us know of the families wishes.</p> <p>Thank you for asking for our thoughts and feedback. I sincerely hope that all involved and with a voice and a vote read over all feedback in its entirety and do not come to final decisions without a lot of consideration, deliberation, and, when needed, compromise to help make this adoption a good one for all concerned and having students in mind each step of the way.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The use of Code of VA 2.2-2827 is inappropriate for the evaluation of literature. It is clearly intended to define pornographic images and video in order to prevent state employees from accessing that type of material on state devices. It makes no attempt to differentiate between pornography and literature. Using this definition as the basis for evaluating a complaint will force the CRC to review individual passages, thereby taking them out of context, instead of evaluating the passage in question as it relates to the entire piece of literature.</p> | <p>In the second paragraph the policy draft notes, "it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have a fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." What is excluded is, "while not interfering with other students first amendment right to access information." The current board is very concerned with imposing what their religious and political ideologies deem inappropriate while ignoring the rights of students and parents to unfettered access to materials that have legitimate literary value. The second paragraph under "Criteria For Selection" notes that librarians shall not acquire supplemental material "that contains sexually explicit content". This description is much too broad and leaves itself open to the strictest interpretation of what is to be considered sexually explicit without factoring in the context and the overall literary value. The Notification of Recently Selected Supplementary Materials section imposes cumbersome requirements for educators who are already burdened with unnecessary requirements that prevent them from focusing on the education of our children. Parents should be able to request a list but educators should not be forced to maintain and submit a list at regular intervals. The only purpose of this requirement is to provide a conduit for outside parties, like the current school board, to attempt to dictate how our educators do their jobs.</p> | <p>Any reference to the school board's decision being final should be eliminated. If the board has the ability to veto the recommendation of the principal and CRC, what is the purpose of having a review process at all? The current board has proven it is more interested in its political agenda than acting in the best interest of the students and families of the County. The CRC will be made up of individuals much more qualified than school board members to make recommendations based on facts, not political agendas. Item 4 under Supplementary Materials Complaint Procedures references the Superintendent or designee. This reference is also made elsewhere. It is overly broad and does not indicate who the designee may be. It should be revised to limit the designee to an employee in the Superintendent's office.</p> |
| <p>Staff member, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>The VA Code 2.2-2827 definition is not applicable to this policy, as it is used to restrict what government employees can view on their computers and has nothing to do with either minor students or literary works. Most English and library professionals would agree that a work can have sexually explicit material and still have literary, cultural, artistic, or scientific value (such as the Bible, for example). A better definition and standard for sexually explicit materials is found in VA Code 18.2-390: "(6) "Harmful to juveniles" means that quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse, when it (a) predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of juveniles, (b) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles, and (c) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for juveniles."</p> | <p>See comment above for definition of sexually explicit materials. An across-the-board ban on sexually explicit materials for all of Rockingham County is not feasible. Some classical works are required for high school reading that have explicit material, but these items have been deemed to have literary value. Also, this blanket ban restricts parents' rights to chose what their children read. Why are teachers and librarians required to use the Massanutten Regional Library age classification? Wouldn't School Library Journal or publisher ratings be more appropriate?</p> | <p>Just a note, that under this policy as currently written with the current definition of sexually explicit materials, the Bible would have to be removed from all school libraries because of its sexual content. Also, removing any challenged materials from all libraries doesn't make sense, as all schools without the counties serve different populations and have different needs. A book that is inappropriate for middle or elementary school may not be inappropriate for a high schooler. What professional qualifications do the members of the school board have that surpass the qualification of our English teachers and librarians? How are they equipped to better judge the literary merit of a work than the members of the division level committee? And what is the point of having an established policy and procedure if at any time the School Board can review the complaint and make a decision?</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | The Virginia Code and School Board Policy references supply definitions of sexually explicit content. The school board policy states that sexual orientation of the characters is not in and of itself sexually explicit. Both policies do not mention how transgender and other nonbinary-gender-related topics are handled. Since this is a major current topic of discussion, it would be good to have a clear statement about this similar to the referenced definitions. | none | It seems like the only options are to "retain, modify, or remove" the material. Does "modify" include restricting to only certain grade levels, only use under supervision (rather than simply in the library), etc.? Will there be a public disclosure of all removed materials similar to how selected materials are listed for 30 days? Is there an appeal process once the school board has decided - i.e. can the decision ever be changed? Since the policies are predicated on parents having a say in their children's education, it is unclear why community members how are not parents are involved. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | The Virginia code cited defining what is "sexually explicit" is intended for state employees and per the Governor's veto letter "should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools." No one is advocating for pornographic materials in schools but there is a concern that language used in this policy will be used to remove materials that help students tackle difficult issues (such as sexual assault) in a safe environment. Understanding context is an important component to critical thinking. I am concerned that by having too narrow a definition or scope the whole of a book will be overshadowed by one or two sentences. | This policy undermines the professionalism and integrity of RCPS librarians and teachers. We are so fortunate to have award winning teachers and librarians in our county. It would be helpful to have the policy that was drafted and submitted by the librarians to compare with the policy currently promoted by the school board. Too much governmental interference handicaps our teachers and librarians ability to craft a learning environment responsive to what their students need. | This policy has far too broad of a scope. It infringes on my right as a parent to ensure that my child is having a well-rounded education that involves critical thinking, broadens their world, and challenges them to consider other points of view. Giving one parent the ability to challenge and have materials removed because they disagree is in complete contrast to American values. It is a total misuse of power and governmental overreach for the final say to be held by the school board. Again, our county is blessed to have award winning librarians and teachers recognized for their abilities, professionalism, and complete dedication to this community, which is undermined by these proposed policies. |
| Parent/Guardian | The way it was before the new school board came in was fine and we should go back to that instead of having banned books. Trust the librarians, trust the parents. Parents had the right to say they didn't want their children to checkout certain material by using the technology that was already in place. Having a list of material that is banned from our schools just makes students want those items more because they want to see the controversial content. This is all so ridiculous. I can't stand the new school board. They are an embarrassment to our community. | The way it was before the new school board came in was fine and we should go back to that instead of having banned books. Trust the librarians, trust the parents. Parents had the right to say they didn't want their children to checkout certain material by using the technology that was already in place. Having a list of material that is banned from our schools just makes students want those items more because they want to see the controversial content. This is all so ridiculous. I can't stand the new school board. They are an embarrassment to our community. | The way it was before the new school board came in was fine and we should go back to that instead of having banned books. Trust the librarians, trust the parents. Parents had the right to say they didn't want their children to checkout certain material by using the technology that was already in place. Having a list of material that is banned from our schools just makes students want those items more because they want to see the controversial content. This is all so ridiculous. I can't stand the new school board. They are an embarrassment to our community. |
| Parent/Guardian | There are already policies in place for these things. Why create a huge mess with this nonsense? | The Bible is sexually explicitly and should be removed. | Unnecessary at best |
| Teacher | There are more pressing matters - vaping, attendance - that the school board should focus on. | There are more pressing matters - vaping, attendance - that the school board should focus on. | There are more pressing matters - vaping, attendance - that the school board should focus on. |
| Teacher | There are other concerns that need to be focused on than this. Do not agree with this policy. | There are other concerns that need to be focused on than this. Do not agree with this policy. | There are other concerns that need to be focused on than this. Do not agree with this policy. |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>There is no reason to add to this policy as it was already written. The sexually explicit description in Virginia code that is referenced is not helpful or clear based on the examples given and texts selected and removed at the direction of this board. Virginia code requires parental notification, which already existed, and prohibiting materials entirely is inappropriate and unnecessary.</p> | <p>As a taxpayer and a parent of a child who will attend Rockingham County schools, it is infuriating that taxpayer dollars are being wasted to require additional time and burden on teachers and librarians to inventory books that are not required or mandatory for students. This is a waste of everyone's time and does not solve any problems that exist. There is no reason for this policy and no reason for educators to spend time on these tasks when there are real issues and children who deserve better use of their caring educator's time. It will remove classic, award-winning literature from our schools, as well as the Bible. To require an exception for every one of those books to remain is a gregarious waste of time. A policy that requires that many exceptions is poorly written and not needed. Additionally, this policy will mean that advanced level books on mature topics will not be available for students. This is incredibly problematic for students hoping to further their education. It puts Rockingham County students at a disadvantage from their peers in other divisions. It is an issue of equity to remove books from public schools when many students do not have access or means to purchase these books on their own, or utilize a public library due to the location of their home and the existing transportation issues in our rural community. There is no room in this policy for books that address rape and sex trafficking which are real issues that students could be exposed to and they would have no way to read about these issues within the safety of a book. This policy forces teachers and librarians to remove books from the collections they have out of fear for not being seen as complicit by a vague and unhelpful definition of "explicit." Again, what a valuable waste of instructional time. At a time when we have a shortage of teachers due to years of systemic standardized testing requirements, a grossly underpaid profession, and the increase of technologies that interfere with instruction i.e. cell phones, (which have a much broader range of available "explicit" content as defined in the policy), it seems not only counterproductive but dangerous and irresponsible to further erode the trust of teachers in a school system meant to support them. It is not responsible or forward-thinking to create a policy to burden them with additional administrative tasks.</p> | <p>Again, there is no need for a new or modified policy to books that have never been challenged and don't exist in our school system. It is inappropriate for a school board to make decisions on every challenge. It interferes with the relationship at the school level with teachers, parents, librarians, and principals. We have educators with expertise, education, and experience who can guide these decisions. The choice has always been with parents, and there is already a vehicle for challenges that does not involve blanket prohibition of access for all students. I do not believe it is the function of a school board to determine what books are appropriate.</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | There is no reason to separate sexually explicit out. There is not a definition of sexually specific provided because the reference to state employee computer sexually explicit is not the same. There is no assurance that LGBTQ characters and relationships are protected from bigots making challenges of them as simply existing being sexually explicit. Additionally I do not feel comfortable with the school board being the deciding party with final say after the librarians have thoughtfully curated their collections and a committee has already reviewed-since the school board is the least qualified to make such decisions. Additionally there is no listed policy to challenge the bias of the school board when they go against recommendations of the educated folks supporting our students and leaving their bigotry and religious bs out of it. I'm very angered the board left out any recommendations by the librarians so I expect this is just for show too. The policy in place was sufficient and any concerns it didn't really apply to school books would have been simply remedied by updated it to reference that included in instructional materials are books at school too. You know, since they are! I also wonder why if one school community challenges something all schools have, one parent challenge shouldn't be forcing limitations on education to all of our students. Also more widespread communication about the opt out policy and limitations on books and monitoring in a case by case parental request basis would save my parental rights to have a well read student while protecting Christian nationalist parent's rights to perpetuate Christian nationalism to their children. This process of removing the moms for liberty list is total crap and a lot of parents are mad about it. Book banners have never been on the right side of humanity. And you aren't either. | See above. Total BS. Should have continued letting Librarians do their job and promoted the available increased monitoring and censorship parents have for their kids instead of taking away instructional materials from my child too. | See above. Sexually explicit has no place being separated from the policy into its own. The board should not have the final say as they are least qualified. |
| Parent/Guardian | There is not reason to revise the policy | There is not reason to revise the policy | Leave these decisions to the Teachers and Librarians. School Board does not need to get involved. |
| Parent/Guardian | There should be no restrictions on what my child can check out of the library. | There should be no restrictions on what my child can check out of the library. | There should be no restrictions on what my child can check out of the library. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | There was already a policy concerning this matter. It is a gross overreach of power for the newly elected school board members to decide to revisit policies simply because they disagree with them. The school board should defer to the experienced experts employed in OUR school system for guidance, if necessary. | There is already a policy in place concerning the selection of these types of materials. Pretending this is the first time this has been discussed is misleading and unprofessional. The school board should defer to the experienced experts employed in OUR school system for guidance, if necessary. | There is already a policy in place concerning challenging these types of materials. Pretending this is the first time this has been discussed is misleading and unprofessional. The school board should defer to the experienced experts employed in OUR school system for guidance, if necessary. |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>These changes are unacceptable in their current format. It is ignorant to define supplementary materials as "non-instructional" because they are directly used to teach concepts and expand student learning.</p> | <p>This policy is wholly unacceptable. The school board lifted most of it from Hanover County and did not include ANY of the recommendations from librarians right here in Rockingham County. The statement barring teachers and librarians from acquiring any material regardless of format that contains sexually explicit content is particularly egregious because it does not account for context and overall value of the work. There are plenty of valuable texts in RCPS collections that contain a scene or two that is sexual in nature, but where the overall message of the work is relevant and valuable to teens.</p> <p>This policy is undue censorship in its worst form. Collections management needs to be left to our highly-educated, degree-holding librarians and teachers, and not be put in the hands of a group of maliciously ignorant politicians on a right-wing, Christian moral crusade. You are also increasing the administrative burden and micromanagement of teachers and librarians, which demeans them as professionals, lowers morale, and will drive them out of the division. This policy harms our children by denying them access to great books, and lowers the value of an RCPS education. Inclusion of the first section about valuing diversity is laughable when you read the rest. Furthermore, if the board is adopting this policy in alignment with the Governor's model policies, he made quite clear last week in a veto that the model policies are not intended in any way to direct school boards to ban or censor material. I am LIVID at this pitiful excuse for a "policy" and should the school board adopt it, intend to pursue any and all legal action available to me.</p> | <p>This policy is unacceptable as written. I agree with the process to require a complainant to file a written complaint via the principal, hold meetings, and have a committee review the challenge. However, there needs to be a clear requirement that all on the committee read the book prior to issuing their determination. The section that leaves it up to the school board to ultimately make the final decision on a challenge is unacceptable and needs to be removed from the policy. With that in place, the committee and early steps of the process are useless and nothing but a PR front. The ultimate decision must be made by the committee itself for me to consider accepting this policy. Additionally, guidelines are needed regarding how the superintendent will appoint community members to the review committee so that the dynamics of the committee are fair and representative of the community.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>These policies are just more work for staff members and administrators when there is/was a policy in place for many years that works well.</p> | <p>See above answer</p> | <p>See response above</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>These policies say they would rely on professionals but their input was not taken into account.</p> | <p>Supplementary materials containing explicit content by the state guidelines for government terms, would mean removing history books, Shakespeare's plays and other satirical items, the Bible and other religious books, many biographies of historical women, books regarding slavery etc. Context is more important than content in this category.</p> | <p>Supplementary materials containing explicit content by the state guidelines for government terms, would mean removing history books, Shakespeare's plays and other satirical items, the Bible and other religious books, many biographies of historical women, books regarding slavery etc. Context is more important than content in this category. Using a complaint form would be the ideal approach but was already in place prior to these new policies that would ban teaching history, English literature, social studies, civics, government classes, and human anatomy classes</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>These revisions are unnecessary as there were already selection criteria in place. This appears to be an overreach on the board's part and a blatant attempt to control other people's children. I oppose these changes.</p> | <p>I object to the overarching ban of all "sexually explicit" material in a way that does not allow for evaluation of the material in its entirety. The inclusion of sexually explicit content does not automatically mean a book is pornography. Context, purpose, and quality of the text must also be considered. Sexual topics can help older teens to prepare for, learn about, and navigate the world around them. Students are often exposed to far more problematic topics and situations in the school hallways, on busses, and on the internet, than they are in books. Our curated collection of library books provides much more balanced and nuanced explorations of challenging topics than what they hear from peers. Parents already have the option to prevent their children from checking out books they don't want them to read. Please don't ruin it for everyone else's kid just because you're too busy with cheer practice to ask your kid what they're reading (per Hollie Cave on Facebook).</p> | <p>There is already an effective policy in place for challenging books. Where is the policy proposed by the RCPS librarians? This new proposed policy is unnecessary and dangerous. I vehemently object to the school board having the final say on what should be in our school libraries. School board members are not educated and trained professionals and have no background in material selection or library curation. Use of a diverse review committee, as has been utilized in the past, and should continue to be how book challenges are addressed, without interference or oversight from the school board.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>These revisions are unnecessary, given that a) a policy handling this issue was already in use by RCPS, and b) an extreme minority of parents in the community ever bothered to actually use it. Purportedly many parents registered written complaints with the county, however the school board will not provide public access to the alleged complaints; not out of the usual churlish refusal to abide by rules and policies themselves, but because it doesn't exist. There wasn't a need for this policy to be revised, and the provisions made in this revision are questionable for the way that they place the final decision into the hands of the board, and further target librarians as part of a political theater piece. As a taxpayer who dislikes government overreach and frivolous spending, and a parent who values the services and excellence of our school librarian, I encourage the board to sincerely listen to RCPS library staff and craft a policy in partnership with their expertise and experience, rather than some discredited grifters from Florida.</p> | <p>Beyond the inherent problems with seeking to "deselect" books that contain sexually explicit material, this policy makes use of a legal definition that our governor himself has stated is not for use by school boards seeking to ban books. It stands out that this board would go against the words of Governor Youngkin, given how eager they seems to please someone in Richmond (or Oklahoma?). Building a policy around such a labile criteria seems shortsighted and more concerned with the act of passing the policy and not it's substance. On a practical level this is an invitation to endless questions of whether or not something qualifies as sexually explicit, which yet again ultimately lands with the board to decide on. If there actually is a pressing need for such a policy it would be greatly improved by consulting our RCPS library staff and recognized experts in this area.</p> | <p>Among all of the other and many valid concerns that many have pointed out, the fact that the decision making power is questionable. Given this board's penchant for dishonesty and rejection of transparency, it makes the entirety of all revision and policies appear to say simply this: "we're in charge and we'll decide what makes it into RCPS libraries." Gicing yourselves de-facto veto power makes it clear that academic programs aren't important, the safety of librarians isn't important, and supporting all student experiences isn't important. To be truly trustworthy in the current climate, ultimate decision making should not rest with the board. A naturally-chosen panel of RCPS staff and community members should be sufficient to represent the will and the good of the community. Perhaps in a different scenario, with qualified, reasonable and well-intentioned people sitting on the board this wouldn't be as problematic.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>These revisions seem reasonable.</p> | <p>This policy seems reasonable. I like that this is done at the school level. I do wonder how the list of newly selected materials will be made known to the parents and general public though.</p> | <p>I like that the final decision rests with elected members of the school board - who can also be unelected. Better than a bureaucrat with no incentive for working with someone with a concern. It is unclear to me if only parents (rather than community members or students, for example) can express concern with materials - I don't have an opinion either way, but would suggest you make that point clearer in the policy. If you find in the future that this process becomes onerous to the schools, I hope you will be willing to revisit it.</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | This definition of sexually explicit is not relevant to literature. Also, students come from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. Being able to read and develop critical thinking about their reading allows students to deal with their actual life and prepares students for future situations. I do not support this policy. | Trust librarians to be the educated professionals they are. Trust parents to have relationships with their kids in which they can tackle difficult issues and talk together about literature. | Blanket deselection of materials PREVENTS parents from making the decision for their own children and allows others to make that decision for them. This is definitely NOT giving parents rights. We have the technical means to allow parents to restrict library materials for THEIR OWN CHILDREN currently in place. Publicizing this ability and making it easy for parents to use the current system actually allows parents to control their own children's exposure better than the proposed decision by a few. |
| Rockingham County Resident | This document is simply a threat from the school board to professional educators. | It is evident that the Rockingham County School Board's commitment to "Empowering ALL Learners" does not truly apply to "ALL Learners" but only those who agree with their specific beliefs. Choosing one set of beliefs to apply to all is undemocratic. | Why is this public inquiry taking place if the school board always has the final decision? We already know the intent of the school board. |
| Rockingham County Resident | This draft is good. Our students do not need any sexually explicit materials from school. | I agree with this. | I agree with this. |
| Parent/Guardian | This draft is overreaching, and a middle ground needs to be reached. The potential impact could cause more harm than meets the eye. I would like you to include librarians, teachers, and administrators who are experts in the field. | This draft is overreaching, and a middle ground needs to be reached. The potential impact could cause more harm than meets the eye. I would like you to include librarians, teachers, and administrators who are experts in the field. You will drive away educators and lose potential future teachers due to these power-seeking adverse behaviors. | You are taking all collective professional expertise away and flexing power that is not what is best for the school division. |
| Parent/Guardian | This form and all that are presented here seem to miss some nuance. Challenged books from one parent may be just the kind of book another parent would want their child to read. Books that meet the criteria for being questioned for sexually explicit materials can/should be marked as such and put on a list that parents can choose to allow their students access to or not each year. If one's child is struggling with/identifying as/exploring their gender or sexual identity or has a friend who is they are trying to support or understand they should be able to access such material at school. When a book is challenged, it should be evaluated for being marked and added to the parent approval list. Marking it with a "color" as they do in elementary school to indicate reading level, would be an effective way to disallow some students who would not benefit from the material, while being inclusive for those who would benefit from the material. | This form and all that are presented here seem to miss some nuance. Challenged books from one parent may be just the kind of book another parent would want their child to read. Books that meet the criteria for being questioned for sexually explicit materials can/should be marked as such and put on a list that parents can choose to allow their students access to or not each year. If one's child is struggling with/identifying as/exploring their gender or sexual identity or has a friend who is they are trying to support or understand they should be able to access such material at school. When a book is challenged, it should be evaluated for being marked and added to the parent approval list. Marking it with a "color" as they do in elementary school to indicate reading level, would be an effective way to disallow some students who would not benefit from the material, while being inclusive for those who would benefit from the material. | This form and all that are presented here seem to miss some nuance. Challenged books from one parent may be just the kind of book another parent would want their child to read. Books that meet the criteria for being questioned for sexually explicit materials can/should be marked as such and put on a list that parents can choose to allow their students access to or not each year. If one's child is struggling with/identifying as/exploring their gender or sexual identity or has a friend who is they are trying to support or understand they should be able to access such material at school. When a book is challenged, it should be evaluated for being marked and added to the parent approval list. Marking it with a "color" as they do in elementary school to indicate reading level, would be an effective way to disallow some students who would not benefit from the material, while being inclusive for those who would benefit from the material. |
| Teacher, Rockingham County Resident | This is a positive step to ensure that materials available to the students are appropriate. I am in support of what the School Board is doing in regards to protecting our students and including the parents. | I teach elementary school and use many "game" type materials to supplement my lessons. Will I need to list all of those materials for parents to view? After teaching for 27 years, I would have many to list. This would be extremely time consuming. Could you clarify what you are considering a game and what would need to be compiled in this list for parents? Also, do I need to inventory and list all the books in my classroom library? Again, this will be extremely time consuming. | I do not have any additional feedback. Thank you for your hard work and for listening to the "silent majority" who are concerned about the moral future of our students and community. |

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| Rockingham County Resident | This is good policy. | It is very necessary. Children should not be exposed to such materials. | Thank you for creating a means to deal with this issue! Keep up the good work of protecting children from this evil. |
| Rockingham County Resident | This is not the best system in my opinion | These look like good guidelines for teachers. | This looks like the best policy to me. I think giving the Review Committee designated input is a good idea. Well done! |
| Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | This policy destroys access to books for many children. This does not allow any area for context to be considered. Please do not adopt this policy. Please listen to wisdom and experience of our fabulous librarians and educators who have offered advice and compromise. | As a parent, I do not support this policy. It destroys access to books for many children. This does not allow any area for context to be considered. "Deselecting" is code for banning. As a historian, banning of books has never been on the side of history that promotes freedom, access to learning, or individuality. I do not support a policy that limits intellectual growth. Diversity and representation matter. | I do not support this policy. This challenge procedure places more community members on a challenge committee than educators who are most knowledgeable in best practices in the field of education. |
| Staff member, Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | This policy draft seems reasonable and manageable. | Providing an updated list of Supplementary Materials that we use in the classroom is burdensome, onerous, and seemingly unnecessary. Most of the ancillary materials I bring into the classroom are selected works published by the author of our textbook. Other materials are from historically noteworthy figures. I am not seeing how the IIABA-Supplementary Materials Selection adds value or safety to the classroom. While I do not object to the selection or deselection criteria, I do object to maintaining an updated list. | This policy seems unnecessary as well. In over twenty-three years of teaching, I have only received one parent inquiry about Supplementary Materials used in the classroom. The complaint stemmed from an online survey instrument used to indicate personality attributes. A meeting with the principal was sufficient to bring about a resolution; no parent/teacher conference was required. |

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| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>This policy has an overly broad definition of "sexually explicit," and does not allow for consideration of context. Many works of excellent literature, including Shakespeare and the Bible, would be considered sexually explicit under these definitions (I'm a weekly church attender, and a director of Shakespeare's plays, with two masters degrees from the American Shakespeare Center. Under this definition of sexually explicit content, _Romeo and Juliet_ would need to be removed from high school).</p> | <p>Allowing a single parent complaint to ban a book for the whole student body is absurd. Parents should, as they currently do, have the right to prohibit their own child from checking out particular books from school libraries, and to request alternative assignments for their own students if assigned texts are problematic. These EXISTING policies should be better publicized and be made easier to use, rather than creating these new, heavy-handed, and overly broad policies.</p> <p>There are some books on the list of challenged books that I, as an individual parent, do not think my 13-year-old is ready for (The Kite Runner, for example). That doesn't mean that it is not appropriate for ANY 13-year-old. As a parent, it is my role to manage content for my own child, but not for others.</p> <p>Requiring teachers to report any books in their classroom libraries that might fall under this policy is micromanaging them, creating a hostile work environment, and ignoring their training as professionals.</p> <p>Lastly, this policy does nothing to support the bullet points listed at the top. On the contrary, it creates a homogeneous viewpoint, squashing diversity and richness of content. If the list of ~60 books that were removed from school libraries are any measure, this policy will be used to make our school libraries substantially less diverse in terms of LGBTQIA content and works by and about people of color.</p> | <p>There's no mention in this policy of actually reading the book, and considering its full context, or literary value. The policies referenced for definition of sexually explicit content are about state employees accessing material on computers, and are not appropriate for application for literature.</p> <p>Having separate procedures for sexually explicit content vs. other kinds of complaints is confusing and unnecessary.</p> |
| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>This policy is unnecessary as teachers and those who work with children already vet materials they use as supplements in their lessons. By including "Supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content, as that term is defined in Virginia Code §2.2-2827" allows for different interpretations of what people will define as sexually explicit materials. I think this is going to open the doors for a lot of challenges to materials (such as artwork and religious texts).</p> <p>What happens if a teacher is using just excerpts that do not contain sexually explicit materials, but the book at some other point does? For example, chapter 1 contains a scene where a teenager is talking about sex, but the rest of the book is acceptable and the teacher wants to showcase an example of descriptive writing in the 7th chapter as supplement.</p> | <p>By requiring a list of all materials within the classrooms, you are requiring just another thing for teachers to have to do on an already sky-high list of responsibilities. Teachers are experts in child development and understand what is developmentally appropriate for the age of students they work with. And again, I think it's a mistake to include "Supplementary materials containing sexually explicit content, as that term is defined in Virginia Code §2.2-2827" because it's going to open a can of worms and people will start to nit-pick what is explicit and it's going to be used by "some" parents as a tool to manipulate teachers they may not be happy with. Is this going to open the door to history teachers to get in trouble for teaching about the Nanjing Massacre when discussing WWII? When reading first-hand accounts of what happened throughout history (which aren't always pleasant experiences)?</p> | <p>Why can't the same procedure be used to challenge ALL materials. Why is it necessary to have 2 different procedures? The Board trusts school level admin to review materials that aren't sexually explicit, but do not trust school level admin to do the same for sexually explicit materials? The procedure for sexually explicit materials is just another thing to tie up the building administrator, teacher, and assistant superintendent and time at school board meetings. Parents are invited to back to school nights, open houses, parent conferences, and have almost 24 hour access to teachers via email and messaging apps. Parents have plenty of opportunity to help build relationships with teachers and know what is going on in their child's classroom.</p> <p>I do have some questions-how many times will a person be allowed to challenge materials? I know it says a person may only make one challenge at a time, but once one challenge is completed, they may turn around and challenge another, correct? Is there a limit on how many times the same material may be challenged? Is there is a limit on how many challenges the committee will review at a time?</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>This policy reflects an over reaching authority that suggests sexually explicit content is inappropriate in all contexts, when in fact, the opposite is true. It can convey experiences and situations from which one can learn and empathize in the full scope of the reading material.</p> | <p>This policy is unnecessary and excludes a subset of the county student population. It is not designed for all learners, rather a highly conservative sector.</p> <p>And again, this policy reflects an over reaching authority that suggests sexually explicit content is inappropriate in all contexts, when in fact, the opposite is true. It can convey experiences and situations from which one can learn and empathize in the full scope of the reading material.</p> | <p>This policy is unnecessary and redundant. Policy already exists for parents to indicate their student's reading restrictions and to challenge a book's belonging in a school's library.</p> <p>Unfortunately, based on the current list of removed books, the results of this policy will negatively and dangerously impact the already vulnerable student populations.</p> <p>This policy further cements to position of the school board to undermine parents of students whose ideologies are not compatible with their own. This indicates the nefarious intention of the school board, one that had no place in the public school system, to insert religious practice into government policy.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>This process seems faulty - book "bans" are rarely seen as a healthy and appropriate response of any society. There's not any historical precedent for a good outcome with book banning. Instead, can we just make a "with caution list" that parents can review. Maybe they can be on a special bookcase or in a special room that permission is needed to check out.</p> | <p>This should be a process that includes many reading specialist, librarians, and teachers- those who are educated to understand why some books may be valuable that is unclear by only knowing only the sexual relationships in the book. Books shouldn't be banned, they can be listed as "proceed with caution" and have parents be aware, but let parents decide what is best for their children - not some arbitrary group. We currently trust our librarians and teachers who are hired by are prinicpals to make these decisions. It's fine to question their reasoning, but let's not create blanket overrides to their decisions without discussing it with them first.</p> | <p>A form is fine for this purpose as long as those who are educated about reading with children in mind are making the decisions. Parents can make individual decisions for their child, not for the whole school of children. Make a list for parents to look at and decide. It can be an opt out form like family life. There are models for this kind procedure in our county already.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>This seems straightforward overall. I would suggest deleting film strips from examples. 21st century learning, correct?</p> | <p>In the above policy, you say teachers and librarians use professional judgement. If you are trusting them as professionals, they should not have to provide lists of newly acquired materials. No one has time to keep up with this. If there are materials in question, they can share those with administrators. Trust the professionals you hired.</p> | <p>Families have always had the right to challenge materials. Your wording adds fuel to the fire. Why did the school board add books to a banned list that were not sexually explicit? They do, however follow various aspects of diversity and differing viewpoints, which are explicitly stated as part of your goals in providing supplementary materials. I wonder if you are providing training and resources for families to monitor phone/social media/online game usage? If not, your time and energy could be spent here. Children are being exposed to so much violence, etc at young ages. Do your families realize this?</p> |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>This sentence is very unclear and I am not sure what the school board is trying to convey:</p> <p>Materials selected for supplemental use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used, or be otherwise available in the school library or classroom library for supplemental use.</p> <p>I am understanding this to say that ANY supplemental material HAS to relate directly to the course or content. How would this work when a student simply wants to read a book for fun? If this is not what is being conveyed then this sentence needs to be rewritten. If this is what is being conveyed then I find this to be unacceptable. I want my child to be able to go to her school library or classroom library and read any book she chooses regardless of whether it relates to the curriculum or not. I want my child's school to have a large, diverse selection of books.</p> | <p>Again, I am reading this to say that every book in a classroom library or school library has to be directly related to the goals listed. I find this to be over the top. Why can't books like, A Wrinkle In Time , The Narnia Series, Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit, etc. be included in classroom and school libraries? According to the policy, these books would not be included because I'm sure they don't have anything to do with the goals listed or curriculum. If this isn't what is being conveyed then it needs to be rewritten.</p> <p>In addition, the amount of extra work this is putting on our teachers is over the top. RCPS teachers do not have the extra time to worry about every single book they have in their classroom library to meet the goals listed. If there are books that have "sexually explicit material" then the teacher can make a list of these (few to none) books and it can be sent home to the parents. The parents can then decide if they want to allow their child to read the books. There were very few books on the list that had sexually explicit material. My guess (from working as a school counselor for years in RCPS) there are very few teachers that have these books in their classroom and schools that have them in their library.</p> | <p>This policy is overblown. In my opinion, there need not be all of these hoops/steps for parents, teachers, librarians, Superintendent, etc. to jump through. This is a WAY over-complicated process. There does not need to be a committee of 7 members. If this policy sticks, the teachers and librarians asked to be on the CRC deserve to have a stipend for all of this extra work.</p> <p>In addition, the school board has repeatedly said they want parents to have a say in their child's education. I agree and support that! However, if that is the philosophy of the board then that means I get to have a say in what books my child reads, not other parents or the school board. For example, Beloved is on the "temporarily removed" book list. My daughter is 15 and I have no issues with her reading that book. I understand that other parents may not want their child to read that book and that is their choice and right. Just like it is my right to say my child can read that book if it is in her school. I don't want other parents and the school board being the "final say" on what books MY child can have access to.</p> <p>I read an article about a school District in VA Beach. They banned any sexually explicit content books from elementary schools. For the middle schools and high schools, they simply listed any sexually explicit books on the school website. This way, parents can actually have a say in what their child is reading. This feels more appropriate and fair because books are not banned because other people deem it inappropriate. They also formed a committee of 4 librarians to determine sexually explicit books. I completely and fully trust the librarians in RCPS. Before this all began in January, the librarians were already talking with parents when there was a concern. A father I know who has a child in RCPS told me how his 6 year old son had wanted to check out a book at his school library that was above his reading level and the material was for more mature readers. The librarian contacted the parents, told them about the book their son wanted to check out, and got permission from the parents for their child to check out the book. This was back in Oct. Why are we not trusting our librarians? Teachers?</p> <p>I have either worked for RCPS or had a child attending RCPS since 2006. As a parent and school counselor I have NEVER heard of a classroom book or a library book having any sort of negative impact on a student or it 'being dangerous for our kids' minds". NEVER. I am also a community counselor. Again, of all the issues that children and teens are seeking counseling for, no one is concerned, worried, devastated, depressed, anxious, etc. because of a book they read from their school. There are SO many bigger issues this board needs to be addressing. The mental health of youth in this country is in crisis. Contrary to what the school board believes, bibliotherapy (the use of reading materials for help in solving personal problems) is a powerful tool to provide wisdom, emotional connection, insight, and comfort.</p> <p>In closing, I go back to the idea of not wanting other parents', school board members, etc. removing books from our school that could potentially be helpful for some students. I am not saying I support sexually</p> |

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| Parent/Guardian | This states the responsibility belongs to teachers, librarians, and individual schools, that's cool, but if that's what you want, why is the school board in charge of banning books? Leave it alone, go back to your private schools please. | This states the goal is " Creating a caring learning environment that values the richness of diversity within our community and beyond". However, that cannot be done when literally any LGBTQ/Muslim/war torn life/poverty/addiction story form of media is banned by the school board, it is obvious that that is NOT the intention here. Do better in representing all students in RCPS. | You literally just added a 2nd form to the previous media complaint form. This is an absolute waste of time for everybody. There was already a media complaint form that could include sexual obscenities, I know as I've filled one out and heard NOTHING back. Extremely scary actions by this organization, attempting to use policy to hurt children. |
| Parent/Guardian | Trust teachers and librarians. Don't get caught up in politics. Don't burn books. | Trust teachers and librarians. Don't get caught up in politics. Don't burn books. | Trust teachers and librarians. Don't get caught up in politics. Don't burn books. |
| Teacher, Rockingham County Resident | Trust your teachers and librarians to do their jobs. Most teachers will probably remove their entire classroom libraries if this is passed. Kids can read on their Chromebooks anyway. The majority of teachers are not playing games, using kits, using workbooks, etc. that are non-instructional as you must think they are. | Trust your teachers and librarians to select classroom materials WITHOUT this criteria. Everyone in this thankless career is in it for the students--NOT an agenda. | |
| Parent/Guardian | Up to the school & teachers | It was fine the way it used to be | It was fine the way it used to be |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | <p>Virginia Code section 2.2-2827 applies to EMPLOYEES of the state, so cannot apply to the students within Rockingham county. I presume you are attempting to use a definition without the scope, but there are better definitions to use in the context of a learning environment vs. a state employee.</p> <p>Second, the librarians and teachers should have exclusive say in what materials they are using for teaching the subjects they are experts in and not politically motivated religious zealots with their specific biases. Certainly there should be a PUBLIC AND OPEN review system in place for challenges to the appropriateness but this should NEVER rest in the hands of biased cultists even if those cultists manage to delude the public enough to get voted into positions of authority and then sieze more power through inappropriate means.</p> <p>Lastly, I think it is wildly inappropriate and often for ANYONE to dictate to ME how and what my children will or will not have access to. The standard should be the teacher has the say in what they teach and I have final say on what my children should or shouldn't read/access out of that list of stuff. That is the way it was, nobody had any issues until the school board (which is supposed to be politically NEUTRAL) decided to take a partisan approach to forced indoctrination of ignorance. They do this so that future generations are unable to think for themselves and they are easy to control. You will NEVER usurp that control from my children.</p> | <p>Virginia Code section 2.2-2827 applies to EMPLOYEES of the state, so cannot apply to the students within Rockingham county. I presume you are attempting to use a definition without the scope, but there are better definitions to use in the context of a learning environment vs. a state employee.</p> <p>Second, the librarians and teachers should have exclusive say in what materials they are using for teaching the subjects they are experts in and not politically motivated religious zealots with their specific biases. Certainly there should be a PUBLIC AND OPEN review system in place for challenges to the appropriateness but this should NEVER rest in the hands of biased cultists even if those cultists manage to delude the public enough to get voted into positions of authority and then sieze more power through inappropriate means.</p> <p>Lastly, I think it is wildly inappropriate and often for ANYONE to dictate to ME how and what my children will or will not have access to. The standard should be the teacher has the say in what they teach and I have final say on what my children should or shouldn't read/access out of that list of stuff. That is the way it was, nobody had any issues until the school board (which is supposed to be politically NEUTRAL) decided to take a partisan approach to forced indoctrination of ignorance. They do this so that future generations are unable to think for themselves and they are easy to control. You will NEVER usurp that control from my children.</p> | <p>Virginia Code section 2.2-2827 applies to EMPLOYEES of the state, so cannot apply to the students within Rockingham county. I presume you are attempting to use a definition without the scope, but there are better definitions to use in the context of a learning environment vs. a state employee.</p> <p>Second, the librarians and teachers should have exclusive say in what materials they are using for teaching the subjects they are experts in and not politically motivated religious zealots with their specific biases. Certainly there should be a PUBLIC AND OPEN review system in place for challenges to the appropriateness but this should NEVER rest in the hands of biased cultists even if those cultists manage to delude the public enough to get voted into positions of authority and then sieze more power through inappropriate means.</p> <p>Lastly, I think it is wildly inappropriate and often for ANYONE to dictate to ME how and what my children will or will not have access to. The standard should be the teacher has the say in what they teach and I have final say on what my children should or shouldn't read/access out of that list of stuff. That is the way it was, nobody had any issues until the school board (which is supposed to be politically NEUTRAL) decided to take a partisan approach to forced indoctrination of ignorance. They do this so that future generations are unable to think for themselves and they are easy to control. You will NEVER usurp that control from my children.</p> |

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| Staff member, Rockingham County Resident | We are all caring and loving professionals who love all of our students. I don't believe anyone put books into the libraries to cause harm. Kindness is called for by all of us in these situations. Most people who work in a school system are there for the students and to raise up or future. I would hope that a team of trained professionals can surely vet books together with good outcomes for everyone. | The principal should be alerted to any complaints by parents about perceived offensive material. Most items can be worked out on that level. RCPS has always been very open about viewing materials and family life. | I personally do not believe explicit sexual content is appropriate at any age including mine through books, tv, or commercials. I would assume upper grades are where the complaints are focused. Parents certainly can and should be able to take the perceived offensive items back to school and alert the principal. I don't think kissing counts as explicit unless it is accompanied by other actions. My personal conservative beliefs may be different from the person beside me but I can still be kind to them and continue to love and support the students and parents in our county. I love them! |
| Parent/Guardian | we had a policy in place. this is a waste of resources due to board members religious preferences and an waste of energy for our community | current board members should step down or remove themselves for creating a distraction from learning and agnst in the community minus the 1 member who honored their oath to serve our children and not their own interests. | this was not needed or wanted by anyone other then religious bigots serving on the school board who wished to control and influence our comminities public school children while promoting private education |
| Parent/Guardian | We need to trust librarians who are professionals and not give so much power to parents and board members who are not interested in the educational value of reading, and are primarily are interested in removing LGBT+ materials. Many of these banned books have been in school libraries for decades and no one was harmed or complained about them then. I read several of these books in high school in a private christian school. I even read Burrough's Naked Lunch checked out from a christian college. This book approval process needs to be education-centric and not political. Banning books is a anti-democratic. Libraries should reflect the full diversity of our community. | I don't agree that other parents and board members get to define what is appropriate for my child to read. Who defines sexually explicit? Right now the board's definition is much too narrow and is eliminating many amazing books and supplemental materials for the classroom and it's taking away the freedoms and liberties my children should have in a public school in the United States. This is not a private christian school or a home school. I have not heard that any students are being forced to read these banned books. Please keep excessive government overreach out of my children's library. And stop adding work to librarians and teachers listing out every new piece of media that they bring into their classroom for inspection by the board. What a waste of time and talent. Those materials have been perfectly fine for years and years until Republicans decided to make school boards the pointy spear in national culture wars and further erode the quality of public education while not enrolling their own children in said public schools. | This process again seems like nanny state behavior. Why is a political board the ultimate arbitrator in decisions that should be left to professionals? Stick to improving education and stop trying to dictate christian values in a secular institution. The elected board does not share many of my values and that is one of the purpose of education: teaching young people that being an adult means listening to people and experiences that are not your own, embracing and sharing in the complicated and sometimes challenging experiences of all members of this community, not just the seeming majority of straight white christians. Many of the banned books do just that and this process is taking away their voices and trying to deny that their experiences are real. The process would be much better if the school board reflected the diversity of this community instead of the majority. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | Well-crafted and much-needed policy to help ensure the physical, mental, and emotional safety of our children and minimize their exposure to harmful content. | Fantastic! I am particularly appreciative of the following: "Supplementary materials do not exist to provide universal coverage but to provide materials focused on all of the above goals. Through the selection and deselection of these materials, it is recognized that parents play an essential role in the education of their children and have the fundamental right to guide what their children read, hear, and view." | Appears to be a fair process for submitting a complaint and reviewing said complaint. |
| Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | What a joke. How about you listen to the librarians advice instead of this sham of pretending like you care what we think. I think parents should be able to choose. And this policy removes that choice. | Also a joke. Stop pretending like you care. | Once again. A joke. Librarians went to school to learn these things. Very many of them went to graduate school to learn how to discern what books are best for kids. Just because a kid doesn't look like you or act like you doesn't mean they don't deserve representation. |

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| <p>Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>What do you mean certain workbooks? Definition needs to be more specific.</p> <p>As outlined, this policy is too broad. Many people truly believe that the library and teacher resources are filled with pornographic, lustful images and information. This narrative is simply untrue. The fact that we are “temporarily banning” books based on 1 parent complaint is really concerning. What precedent does this set for the future? If we were to get a more liberal school board in the future, they would be allowed to ban books that are conservative in nature. In fact, under the broad terms of this policy, the Bible would qualify as a banned book. I use the Bible to teach world history content and it has valuable moral life lessons. However, it contains sex, rape, and murder, among other things. This is a very slippery slope. As a teacher, who is in the building and frequents the library, I can assure you that while there might be a handful of questionable books, the majority of the books available are perfectly within reason. As a parent, I support parents' right to choose. This is a very individualistic topic that will vary based on the student. I would prefer to do my own parenting when it comes to my personal children. I am a conservative Christian, and what I deem appropriate for my children will vary drastically from what others believe is appropriate for their students. Essentially, this is why Thomas Jefferson whole-heartedly believed in the importance of separation of church and state.</p> <p>As a history teacher there are SOLs that require us to teach about the statue of David. Part of the teaching of this content discusses how the Renaissance artists were fascinated with the human body as a result of a better scientific understanding of the body and how it works. There needs to be an exclusion written into this policy for utilizing historically relevant content because, based on the proposed rules, the library would have to purge the majority of its selection. Sex is a part of life and we cannot shelter the high school students from this or it could have dire consequences. I am not suggesting that we should have super explicit sex-filled books. However, we cannot pretend that this topic does not exist. Many children learn valuable lessons through the lenses of fictional characters. You recently “temporarily banned” the book Go Ask Alice which is a story about a girl who disobeys her parents by inviting over a male she met at a concert while they were out of town. The result of this invitation was that the man raped her and gave her AIDs which she eventually died from. This cautionary tale isn't super detailed about the rape, however it was still pulled it from our shelves. In today's society, students need to be aware of the dangers that lurk in every corner. How are they supposed to learn when you remove the literature that could potentially save their life?</p> <p>In addition, I used to take my students on virtual field trips through the World War One trenches. However, we are no longer able to use Google Arts and Culture because of the potential that a student may stumble upon other exhibits that contain Renaissance art that</p> | <p>How do we continue to “encourage the richness of the community” if you are removing books that contain diverse characters? Based on the definition of sexually explicit content, it is hard to teach the VA SOLs for history. While I believe there needs to be a book selection policy in place, it needs to be far more specific than just banning ALL sexual content.</p> | <p>As a Christian parent, I feel that it is my husband and my job to be the gatekeeper for what my children are reading, seeing, and doing. I do not send my child to Weekday Religious Education because I do not want them to be exposed to doctrine that our religion might disagree with. I do not appreciate the school board dictating what my children should and should not read. While I agree that there are a handful of books that should not be on the shelves of our local schools, it is my job as the parent to READ what my children want to read. It is my job to guard and protect my children from inappropriate content. However, what might be deemed inappropriate for my child, might not be inappropriate for someone else's child. It is not my job to force Christianity down the throats of nonbelievers. It is my job to be a light and a witness, and one way we do that is by leading by example. Parents need to stop relying on the school board to parent their children. They need to put the cell phone down and become engaged with what their children are doing. If they aren't willing to read and judge the content of books, I guarantee they are not looking at what their children are doing online. Generally speaking, the best behaved students that we have are the ones that are well read.</p> |

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| <p>Teacher</p> | <p>What time will be provided for us to review the said materials and put together a list? If it is 30 days upon receiving the materials are we expected to do this outside of working hours and if so will be compensated? Teachers/staff already have multiple responsibilities and jobs. If we are to keep our materials updated and relevant to our society, we must keep an ongoing flow of books/supplies into our classroom and this will be a huge undertaking.</p> | <p>It is stated in this policy that we are dedicated to empowering ALL learners. If this is the case, we need to have a variety of materials to show representation. If we are choosing to ban certain books, we are going against the policy saying we need to provide a balanced collection reflecting various points of view.</p> | <p>RCPS has provided grade levels with read alouds that have already been approved. Any supplementary materials are chosen by the students and not encouraged by the teacher. If parents wish for these students not to read these materials, that is more than fine; however there are other students/parents who do choose to read these and they should have every opportunity to do so. Parents have every right to not want their child to read a book but they also have the right to have their child exposed to a variety of educational materials.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>While appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback, this survey appears to merely check a box that public input was solicited, however, the survey itself is not designed to adequately receive constructive feedback. It is disappointing that we were promised a process and opportunity for meaningful input and this achieves neither. Requesting public input on materials with less than a week's notice and then scheduling this item for "first reading" during the week of Spring Break is disingenuous and deceptive. There is zero information on the RCPS website regarding this entire initiative or if it does exist, it's not easy to get to. I request that the Board rethink the public involvement process and defer any action until meaningful public comment has been solicited.</p> | <p>Again, this survey is insufficient to understand and receive valuable input. I reaffirm my comments from question 1 and question 3 below. Again, this is a solution in search of a problem and takes significant time and resources away from educating our children. If you were half as concerned about what these kids are doing on their phones when no one is watching, we should be so hopeful that they were reading books instead.</p> | <p>Why in the world would anyone want to become a teacher in today's environment? Policies that assume teachers are behaving badly and all it takes is for one person to question their integrity, implementing a ludicrous process that will take significant time and resources away from actually educating our children - just because a parent's feelings might be hurt or have a different viewpoint from their kids teacher is a major problem. This is a solution in search of a problem. No decision should be made on any of these policies until sufficient public input has been received and vetted.</p> |
| <p>Librarian</p> | <p>While I'm sure that lawyers have verified that VA Code 2.2-2827 is applicable to library books, I find it hard to believe that it applies when Information Infrastructure is clearly defined; this definition doesn't include anything remotely related to library books. I'm just curious as to how this code covers books.</p> <p>I also feel that the definition of sexually explicit leaves room for interpretation. With library books, an author's intent is extremely important. In order to determine whether a text is sexually explicit, there has to be proof that an author has written a book for the purpose of sexually exciting its reader.</p> | <p>Based on the criteria for selection, age appropriateness and interest level are important. This contradicts the prohibition of books that may contain what you may consider to be sexually explicit content.</p> <p>I have an issue with the deselection of books that contain sexually explicit content without considering an author's purpose and/or without considering the book as a whole. Furthermore, where will these books go? It seems that there will be a massive amount of books each school would have to box up. Will we receive money for these books so that we may buy new titles?</p> | <p>My BIGGEST concern is that parents' rights are being taken when they aren't given the choice for their own children. One of the purposes of public school libraries is to remove barriers to access for students. ALL books need to be available to children. The Code of VA CANNOT be used to ban books. It is a parent's responsibility to do this for their child.</p> <p>By implementing a complaint procedure for sexually explicit content, you negate the need to deselect (ban) books from the public school library. You must give parents the power to make the best decisions for their students; however, EACH and EVERY parent must be given the same rights.</p> |

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| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Why ban books at all? Librarians and teachers are educated about what students should be reading far better than those who sit on the school board? What are the reading credentials a school board member has over a librarian to determine what is educational for a student?</p> | <p>Making a list of books as you have done, and putting them on a list for parents to choose if their students can have access or not, or for parents to discuss with their own children if they feel they shouldn't be reading them is sufficient. As long as the books are not required reading, this should not be an issue. Mark the books with a sticker to indicate they are on the parent approval list and put them on a different shelf in the library if that helps parents feel their students will not be "exposed" don't take them from all students to "protect" a few, especially when that "protection" is being perceived as hurtful to other students. We should be caring for ALL student in our public schools.</p> | <p>A complaint process is fine, it should result in books being put on a parent approval list, not being removed from the library and school classrooms.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Why did you ban the books?? "The School Board delegates the responsibility...to the individual schools?" All books that you ban should have a write up of why the book is pulled and exactly how it is "sexually explicit" so the public can see why. Some of the books pulled are well-loved and/or national or global award winners. (THERE'S A REASON THAT EDUCATED and REVERED SCHOLARS HAVE HONORED THESE AUTHORS AND TITLES!!)</p> | <p>At a school board meeting I was at Mr. Cross voiced his concerned about an adoption of a textbook that a committee of professionals brought to the board for a rubberstamp approval. Instead of listening to the committee's recommendations, Mr. Cross objectified the book because he had research the publisher who had described themselves as offering a "diverse selection of authors". As I recall, Mr. Cross was "ok with black people but not LGBTQ+" people writing material for RCPS. As if the publisher of the math textbook (?) was going to convert a child to a particular sexual preference through math??! So, how are you going to have this school board approve a "balanced collection reflecting various points of view? or a "learning environment that values the richness of diversity within our community and beyond" when it's evident that the board doesn't respect the LGBTQ+ community (it doesn't mean they have to like it- just respect) or knows when they are objectifying a textbook or not understanding that unilaterally removing access to a book is a BAN.</p> | <p>If you are so worried about the "sexually explicit" materials getting out there, why have the complainer write it out for you?! Also, why is there no limitation of the number of complaints filled by an individual per quarter? or why is there not an ability for a book from your ban to be reviewed in x number of years. or why doesn't an 18 yo student allowed to participate in this survey? or why is there no limitation of who can request a ban on a book?</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian</p> | <p>Why should the government have a say in what my child can and cannot read? I don't understand why parents can't be responsible enough to monitor the books their kids are bringing home from school. It's absurd and an overreach of government authority to delegate what content is and is not appropriate for my child children. I find it disgusting that the government is hiding behind children to take away their and our rights to view whatever content I deem appropriate to my household. This school board was elected to give control back to parents and they are utterly failing that responsibility by taking away my ability to parent.</p> | <p>I just feel it's subjective what people deem as inappropriate. I don't feel I have a right to dictate what other people's children are and are not allowed to consume. And how dare someone else think they have a right to dictate what I allow and don't allow my children to consume.</p> | <p>As mentioned before I don't understand why other parents get to dictate what my child consumes. If another parent has a complaint about material in a library they should simply not allow their children to obtain that material. When did this country stop allowing parents to be parents. When did Rockingham county stop trusting parents to do their jobs as parents?</p> |

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| Teacher, Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident | With SSR as a component of English instruction, where, ideally, students apply skills learned via whole class or small group instruction, it should be up to the discretion of the teacher, with parental input and boundaries for individual students. Research shows DEFINITELY that student choice that considers both interest and "reading level" is an essential part of developing fluency and comprehension. Students also learn vicariously through reading, and restricting real life things they may encounter like sex, drug use, abuse, etc., does NOT cause these things to happen; instead, it may serve as a cautionary tale or serve as a model for handling the complex lives of teens. Not all books are meant for all students, but restricting choices to only what the board considers (and the national lists floating around out there that the board has utilized) is overreach. IF a book has content a parent is uncomfortable with, those guidelines can be shared with the teacher and library; if a parent objects to a book that his/her child is actually reading and wishes to file a complaint, the book should be read by multiple readers and considered within its context and merits. That book may be removed if agreed on by readers, but it may also remain, giving that parent the choice to not allow their child to read it. Wholesale condemnation of books on a superficial element is absurd. | Selection of materials should be done by PROFESSIONALS. All librarians (and many English teachers) are trained for this and have great awareness of what teens will read and relate to. If something ends up in a collection that a parent objects to, the same thing applies; restrict your child. | What constitutes "sexually explicit" is ambiguous at best. Not everything that includes sex (implication of it, mention of it, a kiss, petting, intercourse) is pornographic. Humans have sex; TEENS have sex, and it's not because they read about it in a book. Literature reflects life, in all its joy and messiness, and sex is part of that. Again, parents can have say about their own kids' book selections, but believe it or not, many teens read past that into themes, complex stories and problem solving. The board having the final say even after a complaint is filed and dealt with is overreach, plain and simple. Deal with YOUR KIDS, not everyone else's. |
| Parent/Guardian | Would love to see the school board's qualifications in library studies. Aren't qualified people supposed to do jobs in education? | Hope the Bible is removed. I don't want my kids exposed to incest, rape and molestation. | Matt Cross is unqualified and Hollie Cave is a unqualified and the whole board is a joke voted in by many old Christian Nationalists and people that don't even directly have children in the county (including the members themselves). Change the rules. SECULAR Educators ONLY on the school board!!!! |
| Rockingham County Resident | Yes, I support the revisions of as stated in the School Board Policy IIAB-Supplementary Materials. | Yes, I support the draft of School Board Policy IIABA-Supplementary Materials Selection. | Yes, I support the draft of School Board Policy IIABB-Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials. I can see that a lot of thought and appropriate guidelines have made for a good method for a complaint to be accepted and acted upon. |
| Rockingham County Resident | You have to go deep to find out what they mean by "sexually explicit," to see that it's not talking about menstruation or LGBT topics, or other things that are often targeted by challenges. Interesting that violence is not addressed. | Classroom libraries are already pretty curated for student interest/reading levels, etc. My classroom library is nearly 1000 books and grows every time there's a Scholastic Bookfair or I hit up Green Valley. Are you supporting teachers and making sure they are able to make this list of supplementary materials available without freaking out about the addition to their workload? How will they make those lists available? Do the schools do inventory? | Just, good luck with this one. |
| Rockingham County Resident | You provide no links to the pertinent legalese cited. How is that helpful? | You provide no links to the pertinent legalese cited. How is that helpful? | You provide no links to the pertinent legalese cited. How is that helpful? |
| Parent/Guardian | Your agenda to ban books is disgusting | Your agenda to ban books is disgusting | Your agenda to ban books is disgusting |

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| <p>What is your association with RCPS? Please select all that apply.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the revisions of current School Board Policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> |
| <p>Parent/Guardian, Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Your definition of Supplementary Materials seems lacking. The goal of a school library is to be a place where children can find books to read for pleasure as well as to support their educational objectives. Studies show that children's brains develop better when they read. The goal of reading programs is to help children find books that will engage them and that they can see themselves in. Limiting books in school libraries to your narrow definition of supplementary materials does not promote children's reading for pleasure.</p> | <p>1) Where is the definition of "Sexually Explicit Material" The code that you reference could be interpreted in many different ways and leaves many questions. Is the mention of kissing considered sexual conduct? Hugging? What is the rubric that will be used to decide which books are excluded? There should be transparency in this process. These definitions exclude many books that are considered "classics" and are required reading for children getting an AP diploma. How will that be managed? This will tarnish RCPS's reputation as competitive schools in Virginia.</p> <p>Further, high school students are getting ready to enter the "real world". It is our responsibility as parents and educators to teach them how to analyze, synthesize and evaluate information. Being exposed to and learning to evaluate difficult issues of the day with guidance before going out into the world on their own is important to being able to make the larger decisions on their own in the future.</p> <p>As a parent, I want to know that my trans-gendered child will see himself reflected in books to read in the middle school and high school libraries. Having access in middle school to books like the Heartstopper series was one of the main ways we got him to READ. My first child was an avid reader, but this child really struggled with reading and Alice Oseman's series was the thing that drew him in and grew his interest in reading.</p> <p>2) Librarians provided a form in their draft for parents to inform teachers/librarians of books/topics/authors they do/do not want their children reading. Why was a form like this not provided? Librarians welcome that form so that requests are clear and upfront. Why did the board choose not to include this? Is your plan to remove ALL books that ANY parent would have issue with?</p> | <p>I certainly hope that your review of "sexually explicit" materials will include not just a "review" of the books, but reading the books in their entirety and making the decision based on the full context of the book. I remind you that Governor Youngkin's veto letter of SB 235 states that "Current law unequivocally affirms that the adoption of these model policies by a school board should not be interpreted as requiring or providing for the censorship of books in public elementary and secondary schools. Therefore, the bill is unnecessary."</p> <p>Please know that just because YOU don't want your child reading a particular book, doesn't mean that I don't want my child to read that book. Parents have many different ideas of what is appropriate for their child to read. Your job as school board members is to represent ALL children, and that includes MY child. For this reason, I encourage you to re-implement the parent communication forms for librarians instead of removing all of the books that MY child values from OUR public school libraries. Those parent communication forms provide the most representations for all parents in RCPS.</p> <p>Finally, I have filled out this form in good faith that as a parent of a student at RCPS my voice would be heard, respected and represented. I will say that I am not feeling confident. It does not garner good faith when I know that the individuals who have gone through YEARS of PROFESSIONAL training to become skilled and respected Librarians, worked hard to present this board with a well educated and thought out draft policy, but none of their policy was represented in the school boards draft. This does not inspire confidence. I hope that you will reconsider this decision.</p> |

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| <p>What is your association with RCPS? Please select all that apply.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the revisions of current School Board Policy IIAB - Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABA - Supplementary Materials Selection. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> | <p>Please provide your feedback to the draft of School Board Policy IIABB - Complaint about Supplementary Materials/Challenged Supplementary Materials. Click here to view the draft policy.</p> |
| <p>Rockingham County Resident</p> | <p>Your intent seems to try to put just one piece of a policy in place. The last sentence in the first paragraph is awkward and is an add-on and seems to say that all library books need to be content related. The last sentence in the second paragraph just adds on sexually explicit but aren't there other reasons we might not want some books in our library?</p> | <p>The first list for enriching learning covers many strong areas that we want for choosing materials and books for our library. The second list is criteria--how many of these are needed for selecting? Do they need to meet all criteria? First two sections don't seem to totally tie together. Do we only de-select for sexually explicit content? It also says that teachers and librarians must regularly submit newly acquired materials to principal and/or designee? Is principal to read them all? who is designee? I've been a principal--what is the principal expected to do with this list?</p> | <p>I don't understand the alarm about sexually explicit (this is a nebulous term in relation to pulling something out of a beautiful story that helps older students to understand some of what they are feeling and going through in life). It seems odd that we have to file that one form but another form for all other concerns. Why can't there be one form? When CRC gives recommendation to Superintendent, will he/she read all of those books? Why is the school board making the final decision--because of their expertise, knowledge, religion, etc.? It seems like they should just be the committee to start with if they make all decisions. You've got 57 books to start with--will CRC have 90 days to read all of them and then will the superintendent and school board read them all too. I've been working on reading the 57 books since January and I won't finish in 90 days and I'm retired and no longer have a teaching job on top of this assignment.</p> |