

On August 29th I sent an email to the board with several questions. I have twice been notified that you are still reviewing my questions and concerns, the most recent being received on September 8th. After comments made at last month's meeting, perhaps you could at least provide a monthly update on an expected time frame for any responses to emails and book complaints.

In that email I stated my disappointment at the decision to move the book, I'll Give You The Sun, to the junior high and high school. You may be interested to know that the current FCC regulations would not allow the contents of this book to be broadcast on public radio or television.

Two of the questions I asked in that email were whether the Board will give any consideration to requiring parental consent or establishing a rating system for books. It appears that there may have been some recent discussion concerning this. At last month's meeting, Mr. Belfrom, you stated that: "we can put in safeguards and controls and do what we feel is appropriate here." Are you considering such options?

What are the criteria being used by committees to review book complaints? Considering that I have invested 10 months into this process, I think that I have the right to receive an answer to this question. I have asked this question several times but have still not received a response.

This question is important because the Board of Education has approved the committee's recommendation that 3 of these books be returned to the library shelves at Columbia . So I would like to know whether any of the criteria include references to sex of any kind, as such references are found in these books.

The focus of comments at last month's meeting did address the Board Policy on book complaints. But you are ignoring the fact that I have made requests for an audit of all K - 6 classroom and school library books for several months.

The district's solution is to develop a communication plan for parents whose child brings home a book that they do not approve of. The solution that I have offered is to have each school post an online list of all library books. This would include classroom books by teacher name, as well as books in the school library. This would provide parents with the ability, if they so choose, to look up information on books in their child's classroom or school. In a matter of minutes you can find detailed information through online reviews and book summary websites.

You stated at last month's meeting that the process, in your opinion, was working. But my random searches have provided you with valuable information on several more inappropriate books at Columbia. They include explicit descriptions of things such as underage sex, drug use and excessive profanity. So if you are unwilling to perform an audit, at least provide parents with the opportunity to do the work themselves.

All comments from the board thus far have focused on parents, but the district's financial support comes from the entire community. By publicly posting classroom and school library books online, I feel that this would provide some much needed transparency to the community.