



Issue 001

July 2023

Welcome to the very first U-Turn in Education newsletter! Read on to find out what we are all about and how you can get involved.

*Who are we?* A growing, truly grassroots group originating in Nixa, MO, we are concerned citizens, teachers, and parents of public school students who want to support educational opportunities for ALL who seek them. What do we do? We concern ourselves with education related issues in our community. We fight against censorship, and support open choices in education, and for a wide breadth of educational experiences for all.

### What have we been up to?

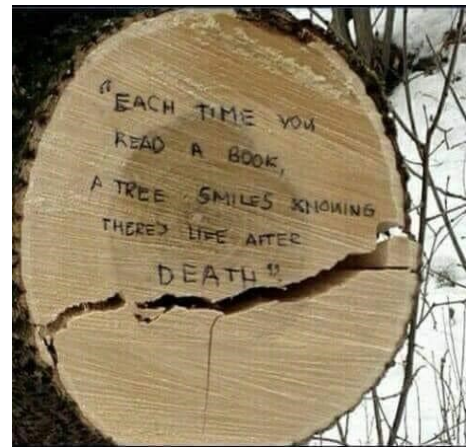
We are excited to bring you the latest updates on the important work we have been doing at U-Turn in Education. As advocates for intellectual freedom and comprehensive educational opportunities, we are committed to ensuring that books remain accessible and valued in our schools.

Recent events have brought to light the challenges we face in defending the freedom to read. In response to book challenges within Nixa Public Schools, we have been actively engaged in supporting the retention of books and promoting open dialogue. We firmly believe that diverse perspectives and thought-provoking literature play a crucial role in fostering critical thinking and empathy among students and reflects a curricular need.

The recent decision by the Nixa school board to establish a standing committee for future book challenges is a strong step towards meeting the district's curricular needs while better managing the continuing onslaught of book challenges. The committee's aim is to be more consistent, utilize trained educators who must reflect minimally biased viewpoints and adhere to state and national expectations while satisfying our district's curricular needs. That said, U-Turn feels it is essential to include only professionals that can truly represent accepted educational practices and standards in an unbiased fashion. We will require transparency.

While progress has been made, we must recognize that there is still much work ahead of us. The preservation of intellectual freedom requires ongoing efforts from all of us who believe in the power of books and education. We encourage you to join us in advocating for the retention of intellectual freedom and the availability of a comprehensive range of educational opportunities for all students.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the values we hold dear. Together, we can create a future where books remain a vital part of education and where students are empowered to explore diverse ideas and perspectives.



### Upcoming events

- June 29: Book Bag, 5pm, Nixa library
- June 29: One Nixa, 6pm, Nixa Library
- July 3: Christian County Commissioner's meeting (board of trustees open positions chosen)
- July 6, 13, 20, 27: Book Bag, 5pm, Nixa library
- July 13: NSD board of education mtg.

## Pridefest

U-Turn participated in Ozark's Pridefest with a booth, giveaways and great community interaction. We were able to meet lots of other book lovers, engage in enriching conversations and make new connections.



## Legislation

The Missouri house and senate have adjourned for the session. Luckily, a number of bills that could have been disastrous for public education were not passed. Bills are eligible for pre-filing in December and one that we can be sure is going in for consideration could affect the way public library board positions are chosen. Stay tuned for more information as filing time gets closer. As a reminder, U-Turn in Education is a non-partisan organization. We do follow legislation regarding issues of intellectual freedom.

## In The News

[The Washington Post](#)

[Springfield Daily Citizen](#)

[The New Yorker](#)

[PEN America](#)

## How you can help

No matter what your comfort level, EVERYONE can contribute to our movement somehow. Some ways to get involved are:

- \* Attend a local board or council meeting
- \* Email school board members and legislators regarding intellectual freedom
- \* Build or donate to a little free library
- \* Donate to us

## Our Socials

