

Request for Reconsideration Form

Essex Westford School District

Request for Reconsideration Form Essex Westford School District A request for reconsideration of instructional and/or library materials is a very serious step. Before you complete this form, please read or review the entire work. This material has probably been reviewed by experts in the field and you are encouraged to get this information from the school librarian/learning center coordinator or your public librarian. Also, review the library selection policy to help in understanding why the materials have been made available to students. Every effort will be made to consider your objections, keeping in mind the best interests of all students, the school, the curriculum and the community.

Requested by: Kevin G. Cummings Telephone: (802)872-9562

Address: 33 Rivendell Drive Essex Junction

Person Represents Self Yes Organization (name of org.) none

School where item is used: library

Item Description: Author: Maia Kobabe

Title: *Gender Queer*

Publisher: Lion Forge Comics

Date of Publication: 2019

Type of Material: book

Answers to these questions are in the paragraphs of my letter below.

Why do you object to this work?

Did you read or review the entire work? If no, what sections did you review?

What do you feel might be the result of exposure to this work?

Do you perceive any value in the use of this work?

January 13, 2022

To Essex High School administrators, librarian, and EWSD board:

As parents and Essex taxpayers, we have concerns about the public high school library's shelving of the book Gender Queer. Our comments below should not be misconstrued as meanspirited toward members of the LGBTQIA+.

We object to the book with raw pornographic images and descriptions; it is abhorrent. Even if the explicit material is comic art, presenting graphic sexual images involving a minor is illegal. By offering this book as an educational resource, the school is essentially sexually grooming kids. The progressive nature of pornography and its harmful addictive consequences are well established.

Have we examined the book? No, because we prefer to not leave an indelible stamp of its pictures, and we strive to keep our thinking clean. We have read multiple reviews, and we have gained an understanding through conversation with those who have opened it.

When personnel set out to characteristically hypersexualize children and teens, people should not be shocked at the detrimental outcomes—these are already occurring.

Peer-reviewed medical journals have correlated pornography consumption with severe psychopathological behavior such as mental depression, sleep disorders, and suicide.¹ The connection is clear: When participants denude others, the result is a sense of meaninglessness and a decline in self-worth. In America, suicide is the leading cause of death among teens²; our schools should be intentional about protecting students. The school is to be a safe educator without destructive material. Studies have documented through diagnostic imaging the brain's response; it chemically lights up during exposure to pornography. Furthermore, negative effects are evident in the brain's gray matter, prefrontal cortex, and neural plasticity.³ These damaging facts call for careful reconsideration about the promotion of stimulating images to a student's mind to distract them from academic pursuit.

The perceived value of this book may be the appeal of your policy's "intellectual freedom" and to inform others of being all-inclusive; however, boundaries are healthy, and there are other methods to inform students that all people have intrinsic worth. Please deny access to such erotica for youths to view with their eye and thereby diminish their conscience. Pornography does not enrich the public; nor does it esteem the representatives of any community.

Thank you.



Kevin and Laina Cummings



¹ Kim, K. M., Kim, H., Choi, J. W., Kim, S. Y., & Kim, J. W. (2020). What types of internet services make adolescents addicted? Correlates of problematic internet use. *Neuropsychiatric disease and treatment*, 16, 1031.

² Ruch, D. A., Sheftall, A. H., Schlagbaum, P., Rausch, J., Campo, J. V., & Bridge, J. A. (2019). Trends in suicide among youth aged 10 to 19 years in the United States, 1975 to 2016. *Journal of American Medical Association*, 2(5).

³ Kühn, S., & Gallinat, J. (2014). Brain structure and functional connectivity associated with pornography consumption: the brain on porn. *JAMA psychiatry*, 71(7), 827-834.