

Bias Response Team Meeting
Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021
2:00pm - 3:00pm

Agenda

Welcome, Introduction and connections

1. Share your name
2. Community agreements
 - A. Stay engaged
 - B. Lean into discomfort
 - C. Speak your truth without fear of consequences
 - D. Expect and accept non-closure
 - E. [EWSD Goals and values](#)

Scenario

1. Purpose of today's meeting
2. Team listens to scenario
3. Team discussion

Guiding questions

- What are your thoughts on this scenario?
- How do you think we should respond?
- Who was harmed in this scenario?
- Who caused harm in this scenario?
- How do you think harm can be repaired in this scenario?

Discussion notes:

- Not every book is for every person. It's ok to put a book down if it's not for you. It is not ok for one person to have the right to take it away from everyone.
- This would be the first time a book has been reconsidered in this district.
- No one has filed a reconsideration about this book yet.
- Harm was caused when the book was criticized for being inappropriate
- We have other books in the EHS library that discuss
- The article relates sexual identity to porn
- A teacher stated that students in her class have chosen to read this book and have enjoyed it and requested it at times.
- Students are surprised when books are banned - Teacher account from a classroom discussion
- There are other books in the library that center cis heteronormativity and no one takes that
- A statement of support from the district could be validating and hopeful to the community

Next Steps

1. Team discusses next steps after listening to scenario:
 - Can the district come out with a statement in support of LGBTQIA+ students and community members?
 - Support of the district and school are helpful for Librarians as they fight back against censorship and persecution
 - We should make sure we support all year around so our LGBTQIA+ community feels supported
 - Display in the library for gender queer books
 - Fix up one heart bulletin board to show student body that we support them
 - Anonymous support from other students - student voice - google form - use harmful questions as teaching experiences, take good questions and use them as conversation starters in Advisory
 - Conversation starter in advisory - creative way to discuss this in a non harmful way
 - Use this as an opportunity to teach empathy and the importance of community through Advisory slides and circles - circles can be during Advisory or other classes (maybe Porchea could lead circles with a student?)
 - Advisory slides to show support for LGBTQIA+ (Transgender awareness week Nov. 15-19)
 - Transgender awareness week is next week Nov 15-19 - One heart will be doing some things during this week
 - Planned parenthood peer educators - can set up table outside of the cafeteria (EHS use to have this pre covid)
 - What would feel valuable to people of the trans and Asexual experience?
 - Stonewall institute for ideas - sometimes they have great information there
 - Everyone has the right to access the information they want
 - Fly pride flag - could be an SJU project. A project for allies to put themselves in front for our LGBTQIA+ community members

Closing Reflections

1. Open space share - everyone is invited to share one thing they took away from this training
2. Thank yous and Goodbyes!

Scenario

There is a book in our library called "Gender Queer" (added 2019). A parent has called the police and cited Vermont Law. The police chief sent the issue to the State's Attorney. There is an article in [Vermont Daily about the book](#) being in the EHS Library.

The book contains 3 sexually explicit pages, while the rest is critical information for LGBTQIA+ youth. There are books in our library with similar content but about young people in hetero cis relationships. These books have not been questioned.

The book won the [NJ Garden State Teen Book Award for grades 6-12](#). It received good reviews from Publishers Weekly and School Library Journal and is recommended for classrooms by Publishers Weekly.

The librarians may have a panel if anyone requests a book to be removed. They have policy and procedure to prevent book banning.

Attendance

Sophia
Jenna h
Paul
Sunny
Raquel
Molly