

**NATIONAL
COALITION
AGAINST
CENSORSHIP**

**KIDS'
RIGHT
TO READ**

November 28, 2022

School Board
Aiken County Public Schools
1000 Brookhaven Drive
Aiken, SC 29803

Dear Members of the School Board,

The National Coalition Against Censorship is an alliance of national nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting freedom of expression, including the rights of K-12 students, teachers, and staff. We are writing in response to your district's sudden removal of Angie Thomas's novel *The Hate U Give* from the high school curriculum and the Board's subsequent decision to develop new book challenge and selection policies.

We have learned that *The Hate U Give* was removed while teachers were teaching a unit on the book. Obviously, that action was disruptive to learning, and as a result, the board decided on November 15th to develop new policies and procedures.

We understand that challenges to educational materials are often emotionally charged. As a result, it is important that districts adjudicate challenges in a manner which ensures that all parties feel that their views have been considered and that decisions about educational material are made in an objective, nonpolitical manner. We have almost 50 years of experience advising public institutions in developing best practices that address those concerns.

Therefore, as you develop new policies, we encourage you to consider adopting the suggestions in the attached guidelines, which also includes sample book challenge procedures from school districts across the country.

Please contact us if we can be helpful.

Sincerely,



Christopher Finan
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: American Booksellers for Free Expression
The Authors Guild
Children's and Young Adult Books Committee, PEN America

A project of the National
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