



Ruth A. Bourquin
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January 23, 2024

Via Email

John J. Antonucci
Superintendent
North Attleborough Public Schools
6 Morse Street
North Attleboro, MA 02670
jantonucci@naschools.net

Tasha Buzzell
Chair
North Attleboro School Committee
6 Morse Street
North Attleborough, MA 02670
tasha.schools@gmail.com

Patricia McNielly
Town Clerk
43 South Washington Street
North Attleborough, MA 02760
<https://www.nattleboro.com/formcenter/Town-Clerk-12/Contact-Us-Town-Clerk-132>

Re: Request for Public Records regarding apparent censorship in North Attleborough and Request to Restore Book to School Shelves

Dear Officials of North Attleborough (or North Attleboro as the case may be):

I write on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts (“ACLUM”) to submit a public records request pursuant to G.L. c. 66, § 10 for all records related to the reported—and very troubling—decision to remove the book “Woke: A Young Poet’s Call to Justice” (the “book”) from the North Attleborough schools. This request is being submitted by email, as explicitly allowed by the Public Records Law, and not the cumbersome portal through which you purport to require submission of public records requests, contrary to that law.

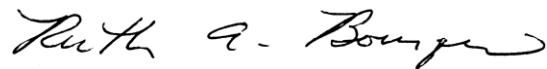
This request encompasses all records related to any aspect of the following: any challenge to or complaint about the book being in the schools, the process for reviewing and making a decision about whether to retain the book, the identities (and offices or employment positions) of public employees and public bodies involved in any discussion or decision about whether to retain or remove the book, the substance of any discussion or comments about the book and by whom made, and *the reasons for the book's removal*. We ask that you prioritize production of all records that contain or reveal any (purported) rationale provided for a decision to remove this book from the schools.

Given this request is in the public interest and ACLUM is a non-profit organization, we ask that any fees be waived as allowed by law. If you claim any exemptions to producing any of the responsive records, please redact segments that might warrant exemption and produce the remainder of the record, as required by law.

As you know, a response to this request is required within 10 business days, but we urge you to produce the records showing the purported rationale for this act of censorship even sooner.

Separately from the public records request, we urge North Attleborough to reverse course and immediately to restore this book to school shelves for the sake of an inclusive and non-discriminatory educational environment, which is required by among other laws G.L. c. 76, § 5, and to avoid the need for litigation concerning this restriction on students' rights to receive information free from political suppression protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, Article 16 of the Declaration of Rights, and G.L. c. 71, § 82.

Sincerely,



Ruth A. Bourquin

cc: Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General

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