

Exhibit K

From: Dina Brewer, REDACTED
To: REDACTED Elementary Recipients, REDACTED
Sent: Tue, Jan 24, 2023 1:05 pm
Subject: Jan. 23 Donuts/Dialogue Follow up

Good Morning Sherwood Families,

I am writing this morning to share the slide deck, as well as the Q&A from yesterday's parent meeting regarding the use of books with LGBTQ+ characters.

You can find the slide deck [here](#).

You can find the questions/comments (and corresponding answers) from the parents who attended [here](#).

In developing the Q&A document, the first question that was asked yesterday was, *"Is this a school to school option? If so, what is Dr. Brewster's thoughts on how this will benefit the kids? Why did she choose yes for RED?"*

I wanted to take the opportunity to give all our REDACTED families an answer to this question.

While this is not a "school to school" option, but a systemwide initiative, I would like to share my thoughts with you.

I would like to start with sharing how sad I was after the meeting. In my 13 years as principal of REDACTED, was one of the most difficult meetings I have facilitated. As I shared at the meeting, what matters most to me is that all students and their families feel welcome, accepted and most importantly safe when they walk through our doors.

I'm disheartened to share that after that meeting, several people (both staff and parents) expressed to me that they felt less safe as a result of some of the comments made by their community members.

The one overwhelming take away for me was that everyone in that room was afraid of something. Afraid for very different reasons, but afraid nonetheless. The fear is understandable - especially when we fear for our children. But acting on that fear in a way that marginalizes others, to the point that they become either villainized or invisible is not the example we want to set for our children.

Fear is a powerful motivator and can make people say and do things that they might not otherwise. To accommodate these fears, the county is considering an "opt out" for parents who do not want their children to hear the books with LGBTQ+ characters in them. I disagree with this decision unequivocally. Personally, I would liken this to allowing families to opt out of books with characters from other marginalized groups (for example, Jewish characters, Muslim characters, African-American characters to name just a few).

While I am sad at the tone of yesterday's meeting, I remain hopeful because of the many voices I heard from after the meeting.

For example, I received this email last night after the meeting from a parent who attended:

Whoa! That was intense. I really just wanted to say thank you for having the donuts and dialogue conversation this evening. After initially hearing about the curriculum, I was not in support of including these books into lessons primarily due to an age appropriate concern.

However, I want to say that I really appreciated you defending this roll out as a preventive method of creating inclusion and acceptance before the kids get to the middle school level, where we as parents really hear about the struggles with kids in the pre-adolescent stages. This makes a lot of sense in supporting our growing kids! If educators can support kids and develop empathy at this young age, the inclusion and acceptance will only grow as the kids get older! Duh. I am ashamed I didn't even think of that. And so, again, I appreciate the conversation that we had, despite some shocking turns it may have taken.

My hope remains that if we are open to continuing the dialogue, we can teach children to better understand those who may not think exactly the way they think, but to accept them anyway.

Sincerely,
Dina Brewer, Ed.D
Principal

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