

Room A

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Good Afternoon. My name is Cheryl. I am a parent of 2 young boys in public school. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the issue of LGBT curriculum, that is planned to be implemented into NJ public schools this coming sept.

We all want our children to have the opportunity to benefit from a robust and effective education that prepares them for success in today's world, and a safe public school environment is essential. This is what we all strive for, for ALL children.

The Notion that teaching about the sexuality of the LGBT persons in history would make our schools safer is a falsehood. What makes schools safer is the focus on promoting good behaviors and making children accountable for their actions is a positive way.

Kids must be taught to respect and treat everyone with kindness and compassion. Bullying of any child or young person is unacceptable and should never be tolerated. The child that is a bully should be held accountable and dealt with based on the schools anti-bullying policy. That's it. That should be the schools focus.

When society carves out and categorizes people into special groups, its only accomplishment is to alienate another. We learn this over and over again as we see failure after failure on policies implemented in society, yet we continue down this path.

To implement such curriculum and ideas into the public school is a cause of great concern to many parents, is a source of high anxiety for non-LGBT students, and will cause much confusion for our young children, not to mention the tremendous burden you place onto our great teachers, of which many don't agree with this curriculum, but are afraid to speak up in fear of retribution.

The curriculum will be infused into every subject matter, math, science, social studies, English, Spanish, music, etc. It is being written by a special interest group, outside the field of education, and is from one point of view. This curriculum is being rolled out as we speak to 12 pilot schools and has not been made available for public debate or scrutiny.

Why all the secrecy. Because anti-bullying is not the objective. The goal is to teach and affirm the LGBT lifestyle as normal and safe and a healthy alternate choice. Some agree with this notion, but many do not.

However, we all agree that we must teach our children to respect and care for all people because they are human beings, not based on their sexual orientation. My children don't need to know about someone's bedroom policy to understand that we must be kind or to appreciate their contributions to society.

Teach and affirm objective of the LGBT curriculum is in direct conflict of my religious beliefs on family and sexuality. We all have the right to choose a lifestyle or belief that is best suited for our families. Our constitution guarantees these rights for all people, not

just a particular group. The right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the right to religious freedom, and the choice to live how we see fit is afforded to ALL. Your lifestyle is your choice, as long as it does NOT infringe on the rights of others.

This LGBT curriculum infringes on these rights to raise our children the way we feel is best. The teaching of sexuality and family life is our responsibility not the NJ dept. of Education.

This is America, a nation founded on religious liberty. Now you are saying that my child must be forced to learn things that not only deny my faith but strip their innocents.

I am a tax payer and pay into the public school system. My children have every right to attend. However, if this curriculum should be implemented, I will be forced to remove my children from public school. This is not freedom. It is a direct assault on my parental rights and religious liberty.

Thank you all for your time and consideration. May God fill your hearts today and provide you guidance and courage on this matter and stop the adoption of this curriculum.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy", Martin Luther King, Jr.

May God bless and protect all of you. Thank you.

Christine Miles
Associate Director of Professional Development & Instructional Issues, NJEA
Testimony before the State Board of Education on Statewide Assessment
January 8th, 2020

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Dr. Christine Miles and I serve as Associate Director of Professional Development and Instructional Issues with the New Jersey Education Association. My past experiences include serving as a high school English Teacher, curriculum supervisor, building-based administrator, and Director of Consulting for the late Grant Wiggins' organization, Authentic Education, where my primary focus was on curriculum, design, and assessment on an international scale.

The State BOE will recall that in the Spring of 2018, the NJEA collaborated with the NJDOE on the Statewide Assessment Outreach, gathering student, parent, and educator input on the lived experiences with NJ's statewide assessment system. Throughout this work, we found that the statewide assessment system has had profoundly negative implications for curriculum and instruction and is severely impacting student mental health. This evidence, in connection with extensive empirical standardized assessment research, has informed the creation of my testimony today. The empirical research supporting the statements are included with this submitted testimony.

1 - The New Jersey Education Association supports the reduction of onerous statewide standardized assessment. Educators and educational researchers know that reducing assessments at the high school level does not lower expectations, it places an emphasis on quality over quantity. Research shows that a rigorous sequence of courses, high-quality curricula, and student performance in their coursework is the greatest indicator of college and/or career readiness¹. By reducing the number of assessments at the high school level, we place the emphasis back on instructional time, teaching and learning.

Dr. Arthur VanderVeen, CEO of New Meridian, the company that is contracted by the state of New Jersey to license content of our NJSLA, urged the State Board of Education to shift its focus away from testing in July 2018. He stated, "The more important indicator of post-secondary readiness is the curriculum and not the assessment. States should be focusing on ensuring a rigorous sequence of courses instead of focusing on an assessment¹." Dr. VanderVeen's company receives a significant profit from the state's \$30+ million statewide assessment system budget, and a reduction in testing would significantly reduce his bottom line. Yet, he urges the state to focus its energies elsewhere.

2 – Proponents of increased testing argue that PARCC/NJSLA is a check on grade inflation and indicates whether our students are career and college ready. However, the educators and educational researchers know that this is inaccurate. Performance on a standardized assessment does not indicate career and college readiness. State regulations provide an overview of the requirements for students to graduate. Students are required to take and pass 120 credits worth of coursework, demonstrate proficiency on locally designed and administered assessments, and meet attendance standards. There is no research basis in the claim that PARCC/NJSLA, or any standardized assessment, will address the

¹ New Jersey State Board of Education Meeting Transcript, July 2018

concern that too many students are not college ready and require remedial coursework. Nor is there research that shows PARCC/NJSLA performance is a predictor of future success. There is, however, research that confirms that a student's transcript/high school grades are what make a high school diploma truly meaningful and give the most accurate picture of a student's readiness for college and career, despite the grade inflation argument.²

3 – The Governor, Commissioner, and NJDOE are committed to transitioning to a stronger, fairer, and MORE EQUITABLE system for all of the beautifully diverse students throughout the state of NJ. A common, and quite frankly, ignorant and misguided claim of those in favor of increased testing is that the data from the PARCC/NJSLA allows the state to ensure equity for the most historically marginalized students.

Standardized assessments do not enhance equity; they reinforce inequity. Equality assumes that everyone benefits from the same supports, while equity provides everyone with the support that they need to succeed. Our current statewide assessment system does not allow for districts or educators to provide students with these supports. Empirical research conducted in New Jersey has continuously demonstrated that student results on statewide assessments can be predicted with 85% accuracy by community and family income levels³.

Districts already collect rich and relevant data outside of the statewide standardized testing data that reveal disparities within their student populations. Testing proponents argue that statewide standardized testing data reveals “achievement gaps,” when in reality, these tests serve to further *opportunity gaps* by restricting historically marginalized students’ access to higher level coursework.

Historically, districts have not been given the supports and resources needed to appropriately support students and effectively address these disparities. Further, the immense amount of time dedicated to standardized test preparation and implementation further consumes valuable instructional time and resources with no valuable return.

4 – As can be seen throughout the country, increased testing has not led to improved outcomes for students⁴. On the contrary, these tests have harmed our students, our educators, and our districts. Standardized assessments have many unintended consequences for students, educators, and schools. Of particular note is the devastating impact standardized testing has on student mental health. On average, students are experiencing higher levels of stress and anxiety than today’s adult population⁵. Students identify testing as the primary source of stress in their lives. Standardized test anxiety results in damages to children’s psychological and emotional well-being, impediments to social functioning and the development of positive social relationships, development of negative attitudes toward school and

² Hiss, William, 2014. “Defining Promise: Optional Standardized Testing Policies in American College and University Admissions.”

³ Christopher H. Tienken, Anthony Colella, Christian Angelillo, Meredith Fox, Kevin R. McCahill & Adam Wolfe (2017). Predicting Middle Level State Standardized Test Results Using Family and Community Demographic Data. RMLE Online, 40 (1), 1-13, DOI: 10.1080/19404476.2016.1252304

⁴ Dee, T.S. & Jacob, B.A. 2006. “Do High School Exit Exams Influence Educational Attainment or Labor Market Performance?” Social Science Research Network, April 2006. https://www.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=942241

⁵ American Psychological Association. (2014). Stress in America: Are teens adopting adults’ stress habits? Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2014/stress-in-america>

learning⁶, physiological reactions from students⁷, including crying, vomiting, loss of bowel/bladder control, and adverse emotional reactions, such as loss of student sense of identity, self-concept, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth. Finally, and most alarmingly, a correlation exists between the rising adolescent suicide rate and emphasis on standardized testing⁸.

The New Jersey Education Association believes that the NJDOE's proposal is most certainly a step in the right direction for the students, educators, and communities of our beautifully diverse state. We urge the State BOE to approve the NJDOE's proposal at next month's meeting and, in doing so, truly commit to enhancing equity, emphasizing high-quality curriculum, and prioritizing the mental health needs of NJ's students.

⁶ Alliance for Childhood. (2001) Rethink high-stakes testing. Top doctors, educators warn federal push on tests harmful to children's health, education [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.allianceforchildhood.org/pressroom/010601.htm>

⁷ Segool, N. K., Carlson, J. S., Goforth, A. N., von der Embse, N. and Barterian, J. A. (2013) Heightened test anxiety among young children: Elementary school students' anxious responses to high-stakes testing. *Psychology in the Schools*, 50(5), 489-499. doi: 10.1002/pits.21689

⁸ Singer, S. (2017) Middle school suicides double as Common Core testing intensifies. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffpost.com/entry/middle-school-suicides-double-as-common-core-testing-intensifies_n_610000

Hello. My name is Tristin Goode and I live in Warren Township, in Somerset County. I am here to share a concern that I, and many community members in my town's school district have with a book that is now in our high school's curriculum. I'd like to just start out by saying that I have never thought of myself as an activist, and before I became aware of this issue, I would have never dreamed that I would be standing before the New Jersey State Board at any point in time to give any type of testimony, particularly since both of my children have been out of the K-12 school system for quite some time. However, in the spring of 2018, when a neighbor showed me the graphic sexual images from a book called "*Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*", that was just starting to be taught in our local high, I was so shocked that I had to become involved.

While the title of the book, "*Fun Home*", initially sounds very cheerful and upbeat, it is actually not, as the word "Fun" in the title is, in reality, short for "Funeral" as the story is based on a teenage girl, whose family owns a Funeral Home. The book is part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer (or LGBTQ) program in the high school, and before I go any further, I want to be clear: the issue is NOT the LGBTQ nature of the book. This issue IS about the obscene images in the book - the book shows sexually explicit images, including genitalia, oral sex, and masturbation. Images such as these, whether they be LGBTQ or Heterosexual, are simply not appropriate to provide to underage school children in the educational environment. These images are so obscene that:

1. They would likely not be allowed through the school's firewalls.
2. They were not permitted on our township's Facebook forum.
3. The local papers would not publish the images.
4. And if these images were found on my work laptop, I would likely be fired.

This book was originally approved by the BOE in November 2017, along with the rest of the curriculum for the following year. The "*Fun Home*" book was not explicitly listed in either the Agenda, Minutes or any readily available curriculum material, and as such, the majority of parents were unaware that this book had been included in the curriculum. The obscene nature of the images in the book did not come to light to most parents until the Spring of 2018 when the book started being taught to 75 of the Seniors as part of a "pilot" program.

Over the next 5 months, concerned Parents and Taxpayers approached the Administration and BOE on numerous occasions regarding the elimination of the book from the 12th grade English curriculum, due to the obscene graphic images. Hundreds of residents addressed the BOE regarding their concern over the images in the book, through speaking at BOE meetings, emails and letters to the BOE and school administration, as well a petition calling for the removal of the book. Over 650 hand collected signatures were obtained on the petition and presented to the BOE. A civil lawsuit was also filed, which was dismissed on technicalities rather than the merit of the case. At that time, we were advised by the court that the civil courtroom was not the right venue for this issue and that a petition with the State Board of Education is the correct path. As such, that is the path we are now following.

It should be noted that the BOE's response to the numerous concerns of the residents has been to revise the curriculum to include two additional book selections in this particular reading unit. Students are now given the opportunity to select two of the three books presented and will then be placed in reading groups within the class accordingly. However, given the obscene nature of the images, leaving the *Fun Home* book in the curriculum under any circumstance is not acceptable.

We ask that for (3) things:

1. This book be removed from the curriculum and replaced with a book that does not contain obscene images,
2. That policies be put in place to prevent books that contain obscene images from being included in the curriculum going forward, and
3. That the school be more transparent with regard to the content of a proposed curriculum when it is being considered for approval, so that parents can be more aware of the actual content of a proposed curriculum BEFORE it is approved.

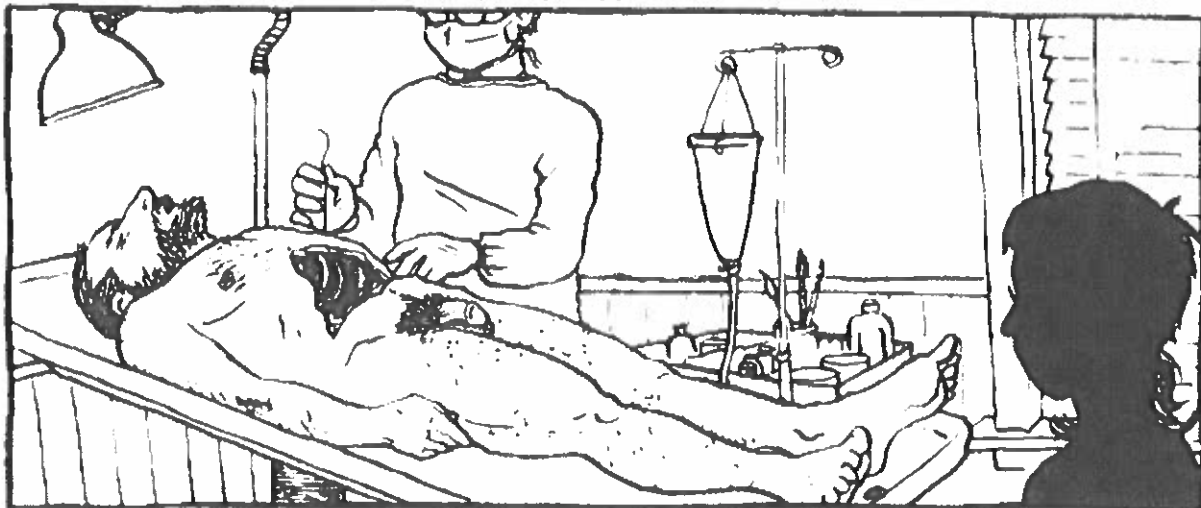
SIMPLY PUT: The classroom is no place for porn!

Warning: Obscene graphic sexual images

Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic

By Alison Bechdel

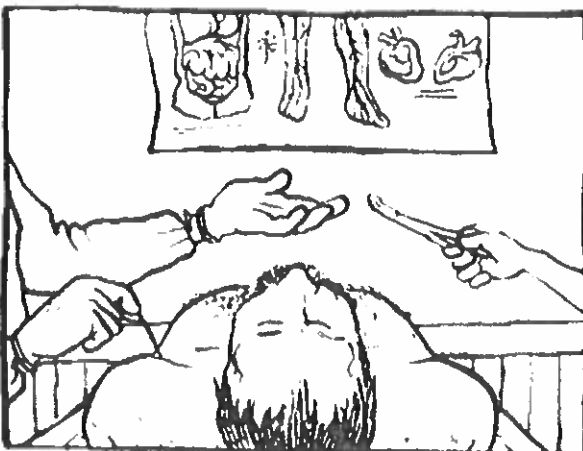
THE MAN ON THE PREP TABLE WAS BEARDED AND FLESHY, JARRINGLY UNLIKE DAD'S USUAL TRAFFIC OF DESICCATED OLD PEOPLE.



THE STRANGE PILE OF HIS GENITALS WAS SHOCKING, BUT WHAT REALLY GOT MY ATTENTION WAS HIS CHEST, SPLIT OPEN TO A DARK RED CAVE.



IT FELT LIKE A TEST. MAYBE THIS WAS THE SAME OFFHANDED WAY HIS OWN NOTORIOUSLY COLD FATHER HAD SHOWN HIM **HIS** FIRST CADAVER.



THERE WAS SOME PRACTICAL EXCHANGE WITH MY FATHER DURING WHICH I STUDIOUSLY BETRAYED NO EMOTION.



OR MAYBE HE FELT THAT HE'D BECOME TOO INURED TO DEATH, AND WAS HOPING TO ELICIT FROM ME AN EXPRESSION OF THE NATURAL HORROR HE WAS NO LONGER CAPABLE OF.

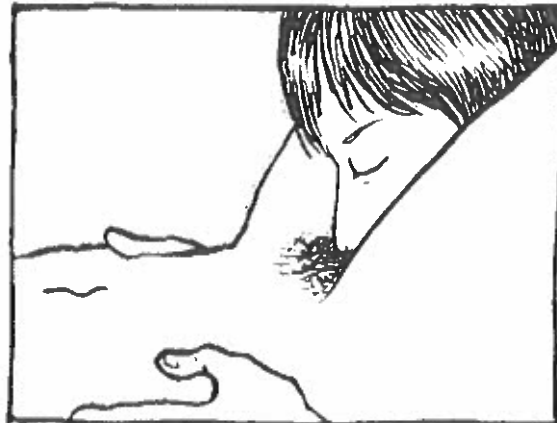
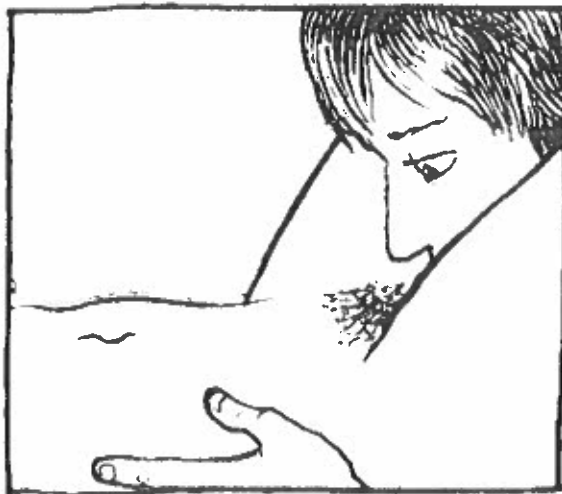


VEERING TOWARD SCYLLA SEEMED MUCH THE SAFER ROUTE. AND AFTER NAVIGATING THE PASSAGE, I SOON WASHED UP, A BIT STUNNED, ON A NEW SHORE.



IN TRUE HEROIC FASHION, I MOVED TOWARD THE THING I FEARED.

YET WHILE ODYSSEUS SCHEMED DESPERATELY TO ESCAPE POLYPHEMUS'S CAVE, I FOUND THAT I WAS QUITE CONTENT TO STAY HERE FOREVER.

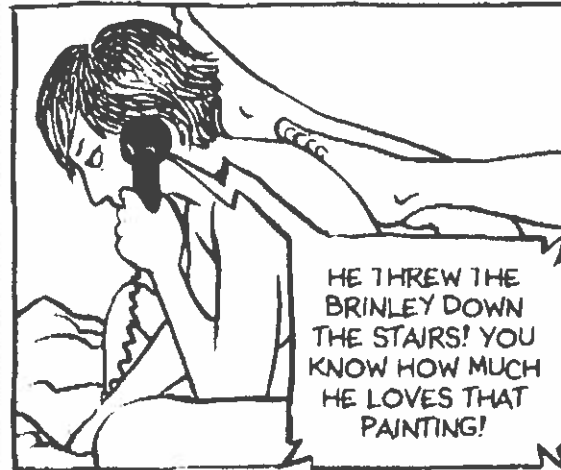


...OTHERS AS PORNOGRAPHY. IN THE HARSH LIGHT OF MY DAWNING FEMINISM, EVERYTHING LOOKED DIFFERENT.



THIS ENTWINED POLITICAL AND SEXUAL AWAKENING WAS A WELCOME DISTRACTION.

THE NEWS FROM HOME WAS INCREASINGLY UNSETTLING.



SOON AFTER JOAN AND I HAD MOVED IN TOGETHER FOR THE SUMMER, I GOT MOM'S CALL ABOUT THE DIVORCE.

AND TWO WEEKS AFTER THAT, THE CALL ABOUT THE ACCIDENT.



LGBTQ testimony, January 8th, 2020

Good morning. My name is Alfonso Cirulli. I am an elected official of the Township of Barnegat here in New Jersey, serving as its Mayor or Committeeman for 14 years. Prior to that, I was an educator for over 33 years, ultimately achieving the position of Assistant Principal for the Pinelands Regional School District. I have, therefore, personal knowledge of, and experience in, the disciplines of education and politics. For that reason, you should take special note of my testimony before you this day.

New Jersey Senate Bill 1569 is an absolute disgrace to the citizens of the State of New Jersey... especially its vulnerable children and their unsuspecting parents. It is an attempt to strip away parental rights... for it is parents who have the obligation, not the state, to educate their children in matters of sex. If you doubt this, check your history: Nowhere in the 200-plus years of the existence of our nation was sex education not the parents' responsibility and **right**... until this "new" millennium. To remove that right from parents is a debasement of our society, not an enlightenment of it.

Further, the negative influence, and thus harm, to our children cannot be more strongly stated. From my extensive experience in education, I can tell you that children are not psychologically prepared to deal with this topic. These are the formative years of our youth. They should be educated in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to prepare them for being a productive citizen, not social-engineered into a person contrary to ***what their parents, not the State, want***. Such social-engineering will lead to more gender dysphoria and introduce them to what has over many millennia been seen as an unnatural and unhealthy lifestyle.

What is worse, if you are supporting this curriculum because you think it is going to stop bullying, you are mistaken. Unfortunately, many people have been bullied at one time or another especially during their school years. As a high school administrator, I spent most of my days dealing with these issues and I know from personal experience you are not going to completely eradicate it. To think you will achieve such a Utopia is beyond wishful thinking. There isn't an adult in this room who hasn't

been bullied in some manner or form ***in their adulthood***. Thus, it is a reality of the human condition.

Notwithstanding, and thankfully, there are laws and educational programs ***already in place*** that are utilized to deal with this problem. But, to isolate sexual preference as a specifically identified issue is to ignore the many other forms of bullying. Therefore, it is necessary to keep the language of anti-bullying activities generic so that each school district, each school, can adjust its program to meet its own particular needs.

We are being told schools will have to, ***“Portray the LGBTQ Culture.”*** Yet, The Garden State Equality Group overseeing the writing of the curriculum is doing so ***without parental input***. As an elected official of Barnegat Township, I am perplexed as to how this is allowed to occur.

I can't emphasize enough the damage that NJ Senate Bill 1569 is going to do to children. How are politicians and political interest groups **dictating** educational policies that usurp the authority of local school boards as well as you, the Commissioner and members of the N.J. Department of Education?

At the very least this bill will promote sexual experimentation characterized by many transient sexual relationships. Kids will also not only be exposed to gender transitioning, but given the services to actually transition without their parents' consent or knowledge. This is an outright violation of a parents' rights on how to bring up *their* children... especially by not giving them the choice to opt out.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have a tremendous responsibility to protect our children. N.J. Senate Bill 1569 is going to irreparably harm many of them. Please consider what I have said, do your own research, and then reject this horrendous policy.

Respectfully submitted,

Alfonso Cirulli

[REDACTED]

Barnegat, N.J. 08005

[REDACTED]

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I am a veterinarian and my wife is pharmacist, we are parents of 4 children.

I immigrated to USA 15 years ago for freedom and respect of individual choices including freedom of speech, beliefs and religions.

The USA has hundreds of minority communities and hundreds of cultures and religions, we have to respect and appreciate everyone But If we allow every minority to force their belief and their lifestyle on others that will lead to negative consequences, because the other minorities will feel insecure, then they may start finger pointing each other.

For example

Prostitution is illegal in majority of USA states BUT it is legal in Nevada, ARE we going to teach our kids about prostitutes lifestyle and their contributions in the usa history? They work legally and pay taxes, are we telling our kids if you interested to be professional you should move to live and work in Nevada?

Another example

Pornography business is legal in many states to practice and in all USA to purchase and watch, Are we going to teach our kids how to be a professional porno star and get paid for sexual activities??

IN CONCLUSION

I believe sexual orientation and sexual life style are for sure very private and sensitive subject, and it varies between different cultures and Religions.

Teaching our kids about LGBTQ+ minority will open the door for many other communities to seek the same route and push hard their lifestyles on others.

I am asking the respected Board of Education in NJ to reconsider the LGBTQ+ Inclusive curriculum,

Either do not implement it at all **OR** at least limit it for one optional class and allow parents to OPT OUT their children off the class if they wish so.

Lastly,

I pay about 25% of my income for federal and state taxes.

If both options (mentioned above) will not work for you and you choose to go ahead with inclusive LGBTQ+ curriculum,

Would you consider offering parents a **State Voucher and Tax Credit Program**? Some states offer government-provided aid that allows parents to use public funds to pay for **private school tuition**. This **assistance** ranges from tax credits, which reimburse parents for some expenses, to vouchers that can cover up to half of a **private school's tuition**.

I am personally will seek for that voucher program with all legal means.

Thanks so much for listening.

Hello everyone, my name is Noreen [REDACTED] I have children in Kindergarten, 2nd grade, [REDACTED] grade, [REDACTED] grade, and [REDACTED] grade at [REDACTED]

My children were initially attending a district school until it closed. I was unsure at first, but when I looked into [REDACTED] and spoke to their awesome teachers, I chose to send them there. I noticed major improvements in my children's academics ever since. One of my sons did well in his previous school on his own, but he wasn't challenged enough. Since enrolling in [REDACTED] he is able to get individualized attention that challenges him. My other son, in his previous school, could not read. After his first marking period at [REDACTED], he was able to read and he actually enjoyed it. Within the first day of school, the principal and the teachers knew all of the children's names and within the first week, the principal knew all of my children's names, even the ones that didn't yet attend. This showed me that my children were acknowledged and cared for.

[REDACTED] is responsive to the needs of families. There have been several times that they were quick to meet the needs of my family, but a few years ago, I lost my twin sons. [REDACTED] took up a collection to help me pay for their funerals. This made me feel that we were important, that we mattered, and like there was nothing [REDACTED] wouldn't do for my family or my children. I believe all children should be able to attend to a school that cares for families that much.

Now, I have 5 children attending [REDACTED] and have encouraged lots of family members and neighbors to send their children there. I attended school in [REDACTED] and I know that [REDACTED] city parents have many school options. [REDACTED] schools are finally improving with renaissance schools like [REDACTED] I hope that me and my children and all the parents at our school can continue to rely on the state's support for schools like [REDACTED] Thank you!

To the state department of Education:

My name is Marina , I am here to testify about the LGBT curriculum.

As a concerned parent, I am here to share a personal experience.

As a child, I was raised overseas in a country controlled by the right extremists, who belonged to the majority religion (which I did not belong to).

They forced their religion and ideology on kids at schools. I had to study and memorize verses of their holy book, study history of their religious leaders and write composition statements about them, glorifying and admiring their ideology and beliefs that I didn't believe in.

As a Child, this left me feeling both confused and oppressed. Confused as I didn't believe in the stuff I was writing (I went home to different teachings), oppressed because I couldn't say no , I had to carry on in order to pass exams and graduate school.

I dreamt of a country with freedom of religion, where no one can force their beliefs or ideology on anyone, I dreamt of America, the constitution, the first amendment, I left everything (friends, family and memories) to come here and start my life from scratch, to give a better childhood to my children.

Only to find out that instead of the extreme right back in the country of my birth, some group here is controlling everything as well, not only media, but now schools trying to infuse & force LGBT agenda into our kids' brains.

This curriculum is written by a special interest group & from one point of view aiming to glorify gays , lesbians and transgenders , setting them as heroes and role models encouraging kids to follow their footsteps.

Teaching sexuality & family life is the responsibility of parents, they are the only ones who get to choose how and when to teach this private matter to their children not schools & this curriculum is tripping parents their right to teach and raise their kids the way they intend. Because those teachings are against the religion, beliefs and traditions of many parents , hence it is a direct assault to our religious freedoms.

Jesus' teachings are removed from schools as they were perceived as hurting to the feelings of non-christian students, in the same manner, I request this curriculum to be removed from schools , although it is not religious, but it is affecting my religious freedom, being that it focuses on teaching LGBT history , glorifying them and setting them as examples my kids should follow.

Lastly, I want to mention that this curriculum is not in the best interest of our children, It is going to be introduced to teenage kids, this critical stage in their lived , with influx of hormones, their bodies changing and them wanting to feel in charge, and they are now grown ups not kids anymore,etc. all of this is affecting their psychological state and decision making capabilities (and we know they are not mature enough to make life changing decisions, especially those related to their sexual lives). They will have plenty of time when they grow up and graduate school to choose and experiment, by then they will be mature enough to decide which path they want to follow, any introduction or talk about sexual matters and LGBT is stripping their innocence and is a form of abuse.

In whose best interest to introduce this curriculum to our teens in their most vulnerable stage? A stage where they are most confused about their bodies and identities already, so instead of holding their hands and helping them focus on building their brains and characters, to raise a mature confident generation that will continue participating in the success and greatness of this nation, we are throwing this curriculum at them to confuse them more.

We need to invest our tax money into advanced academic teachings, buses, meals , teacher salaries, (stuff that we all agree will build better school systems) rather than waste it on a controversial issue like this curriculum.

As a mother and taxpayer , I feel it is so unfair that my hard earned tax money would be used to fund a school system where my kids would learn stuff against my beliefs and religion.

As a patriot who loves America to death and wants to see it continue to foster freedom of religion and beliefs for all,

I plead you to stop this curriculum from being taught to our kids.

Thank you

January 8, 2020

To the Department of Education/Board Members;

Good day everyone, today I come here as a citizen and a concern parent. I don't have anything against the LGBT community, but when it comes to my children I will turn like a lion, not against the LGBT community but you. Because I know that you have a lot to do with the educational system, if not than you would only occupy some chairs in this room. If you have a place here is because you scrutinize every subject that is going to be taught and you will know what this new LGBT curriculum brings and know what academic education is. Gender Identity is not the educator please to teach! An educator teach about how to read/write, add/subtract, how America became a great free country, science on how plants grow, how matter works and so on..... I don't think I have to tell you that children are not fully developed in mind and body, so let's protect, respect and treat them as children. I'm very offended because you let this new LGBT curriculum pass. And you taking away my rights as a parent! I gave birth to my children not you!! You are forcing me to take my kids out of the public school. Is my right to help them find their identity! I want this LGBT curriculum to be removed and please stick with your job as an educator. Thank you

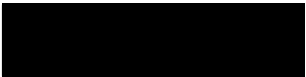
Respectfully;

Odalys Vasquez

Good Evening Board Members,

My name is Tonisha Parker. Im a proud Parent Advocate. I wanted to speak about the past deficit. As things are looking we made a bigger whole from keeping Vets open. If we do not get emergency funding from the state, has anyone thought about what happens next? I certainly have. Will we in turn maybe close additional schools or have to stop the preschool programs all together? Honestly neither one is an option. I am speaking as a mother of preschool age children. We are halfway through the school year and I still have yet to hear of solutions of any kind about this over 35 million dollar deficit. A freeze on the funds is not a solution to me. There are sgill techers that need to be hired. The time is now to figure this out. Our children depends on these schools and this money.

tonisha@greatcamdenschools.org



Good Afternoon State Board members,

My name is Carla [REDACTED] I live in Camden NJ, I have two children that attend [REDACTED]

school. I am a parent advocated leader with Parents for Great Camden Schools. I am here today to speak on past deficits. I am very concerned about this issue, because this is going to affect transportation, and if there's no transportation being provided how are students supposed to make it to school and get an education. Student's grades will start to drop if parents have no way to take their students to school. I worried that additional cuts will be made to programs such as After school programs, English Language Learners, and teachers. As a mother I will not allow my children to walk to school in this environment and in this weather. So I am here today to ask where's the emergency funds that was promised for our students ?

Thank You, Carla [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

→ where is the H + P

14

LGBT Teaching In School

Thank you for hearing what we have to say today.

Hi I'm Albert Parker

Let me pretend for a moment that I am the governor of NJ, and I just passed a law that all middle schools and public high schools have to teach the Bible in class. There is no opt out for parents or students. It is mandatory! What would you do?? You would do what I'm doing right now.

I can only imagine- you would be calling this governor and telling him that this is unconstitutional.... Am I right? Of course I am

Why? Because Christians don't have a say on what is being taught to our children. You can't teach the Bible which teaches morals and proper living. That's not right.

No, we are told that our children will be learning LGBT teachings, and we have been told to shut up and take it. (It is mandatory)

This LGBT teaching is mandatory and there is no opt out for any reason.

Well, there is a bill that was passed in NJ in 2010 called the (HIB) Anti-bullying Bill.

READ (HIB) BULLYING LAW

By passing this bill and making it mandatory you have violated the anti-bullying law in the state of NJ. I never thought that our legislators, superintendents and school boards would be bullies against religious freedom. You have come against the rights of Christians, Muslims, and Jewish religion. You have come against parents rights on what should be taught to their children. They are our children not yours.

To put this law into place without an option to opt out of the teaching is unconstitutional and violates a parents right.

You have become bullies and have violated your own law of anti-bullying.

The bullies sit before us now, and tell us the tax paying citizen what will be taught to our children in school.

We will not be bullied and we will not be silent. Our constitutional rights have been violated.

I agree with the Anti-bullying law that no one should be bullied. Do you?

I agree that anyone who is bullied for any reason, LGBT, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Black, White, Hispanic. The bullies should be dealt with. (The Bullier is You)

The Anti-bullying law says that we should speak up if we or our children are being bullied. For any reason... This is harassment, intimidation, and bullying (That's what your law says) That's what I'm doing today... speaking out against my religious beliefs being violated by a bill that forces students to be taught something against their beliefs.

This law was forced on us without any consideration of the parents rights and the students rights.

This is a sad day in America when our leaders (school boards, governor, legislators) can force something on our children and parents that is against their beliefs.

I feel that we as parents have been harassed, intimidated and bullied by this bill/law to teach our children LGBT sexual preferences in our schools.

I close with this, if you believe in this anti-bullying law you must act in our favor and stop this teaching in our schools or you provide an opt out for anyone that does not want their child exposed to this type of teachings.

Thank you!

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My name is Natalie Baker and I am here today to support the LGBTQ inclusionary curriculum. I am here today as a mother and an ally to LGBTQ people. I am a psychotherapist and a licensed Marriage and Family therapist in the state of NJ. I am also recently elected to the local BOE and I attended training for new BOE members called Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources. I learned as a BOE member, your job is to do the best for the students. Not the administration, not the teachers, not the parents. When I was sworn in I took an oath to do what is best for the students.

Having a curriculum that includes marginalized groups is the best for all students.

1. First, let us clarify that LGBTQ curriculum is not about sex education. It is about including a group of people that has been erased from our history books. NJ has a long history of including marginalized groups. Black history month was first celebrated in February, 1976 and woman's history month was first recognized in 1982. In 2019, a bill was signed in to law recognizing two more marginalized groups: people with disabilities and LGBTQ people. These laws ensure that diverse people are represented accurately.

2. Representation is important. LGBTQ youth are one of our most vulnerable populations. 40% of these youth have seriously considered suicide. 98% have heard the term "gay" used as a slur in their schools. (as in that is so gay)

70 % heard it frequently. LGBTQ students experienced higher rates of victimization with 42% saying they considered dropping out of school because of harassment.

What is a proven way to decrease victimization of LGBTQ students?

In schools with inclusive curriculum, students were less likely to hear "gay" used in a negative way.

- *they were more likely to feel safe

- *less likely to be victimized

- *more likely to report that their classmates were somewhat accepting of LGBTQ people

3. Not only is it important for LGBTQ youth to see themselves represented, its important for non LGBTQ people to know about LGBTQ contributions.

We should all know about Alan Turing, the father of computer science, and Harvey Milk, the Stonewall Riots, the fight for Civil Rights, the AIDS epidemic (which killed more people than the Vietnam war) and the marriage equality act of 2015.

Every child deserves to understand the complexity of human history, including indigenous people, the history of African Americans in our country, the historical contributions of women and the contributions of disabled and LGBTQ people.

Some people are uncomfortable, but we must not let their feelings interfere with our ability to do the right thing. We need to have the uncomfortable conversations because without them we are putting the most vulnerable children at risk.

Adult's uncomfortable feelings should not be given more value than the well being of our NJ students. It is not complicated: you get to love who want to love, dress how you want to dress and be who you are.

Teaching about LGBTQ historical contributions is not teaching sex education. These lessons help students find the words to accurately describe the people they see everyday. And no one is too young to learn about love and respect for the diverse individuals and families in their school community.

Inclusive Curriculum Helps LGBTQ Youth

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Good news! LGBTQ students who attend schools with curriculum, including sexual health, that is inclusive of LGBTQ people, history, and events have more accepting schools and better academic outcomes.

Unfortunately, few students are taught accurate information about LGBTQ people and topics.

From history to art to sexual health education, it's necessary for students' health and academic success that they see themselves, and each other, reflected in the curriculum.

Only 19.8% of LGBTQ students

were taught positive representations about LGBTQ people, history, or events in school.



18.4% had been taught negative content about LGBTQ topics.



Less than half (41%) of LGBTQ students

could find information about LGBTQ-related issues in their school library.



Only 6.7% of LGBTQ students

received LGBTQ-inclusive sex education at school.

About half of LGBTQ students

(49.2%) with internet access at school could access LGBTQ-related information online via school computers.



Together, we can make our schools safe and inclusive for LGBTQ youth. Here's how you can help:

Create an LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum
glsen.org/curriculum

Integrate LGBTQ history
glsen.org/lgbtqhistory

Train teachers on how to ensure their curriculum is LGBTQ inclusive
glsen.org/training

GLS N[®]

Data from the 2017 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth in Our Nation's Schools.

Learn more at glsen.org/nsccs

INTRODUCTION

I'm proud to share The Trevor Project's inaugural comprehensive survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health.

This is our first wide-ranging report from across a national survey of LGBTQ youth across the United States. With over 34,000 respondents, it is the first survey of LGBTQ youth mental health ever conducted and provides a critical understanding of the experience impacting their lives.

The data provides a sobering look at how far we still have to go to protect LGBTQ young lives. But the survey also reveals the resilience and diversity of LGBTQ youth and provides guidance on what can be done to enable them to survive and thrive.

Among some of the key findings of the report from LGBTQ youth in the survey:

- **39% of LGBTQ youth** seriously considered attempting suicide in the past twelve months, with one-third of transgender and non-binary youth having seriously considered
- **71% of LGBTQ youth** reported feeling sad or hopeless for at least two weeks in the past year.

Less than half of LGBTQ respondents were out to an adult at school, with youth less likely to disclose their gender identity than sexual orientation.

2 in 3 LGBTQ youth reported that someone tried to convince them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity, with youth who have undergone conversion therapy more than twice as likely to attempt suicide as those who did not.

71% of LGBTQ youth noted some reports of discrimination due to either their sexual orientation or gender identity.

- **58% of transgender and non-binary youth** reported being discouraged from coming through their comfort to their gender identity.

- **76% of LGBTQ youth** felt that the rising political climate impacted their mental health or sense of self.

- **87% of LGBTQ youth** said it was important to them to reach out to a crisis intervention organization that focuses on LGBTQ youth, and 98% said a safe space social networking site for LGBTQ youth would be valuable to them.

This survey builds upon critical research done by many of our partner organizations over the years and we are particularly proud that it includes voices of youth from more than 100 sexual orientations and more than 100 gender identities from all 50 states across the country.

We hope this report elevates the voices and experiences of LGBTQ youth providing insights that can be used by the many organizations working alongside The Trevor Project to support LGBTQ young people around the world. We also hope this report shows LGBTQ youth that we hear them, that their lives have value, and that we are here to support them 24/7.



Amit Paley

Amit Paley
CEO & Executive Director
The Trevor Project

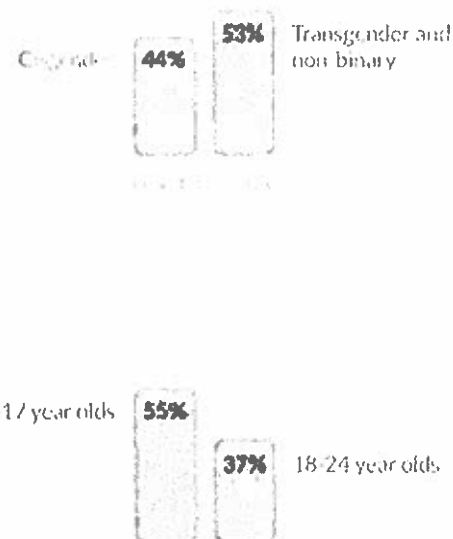
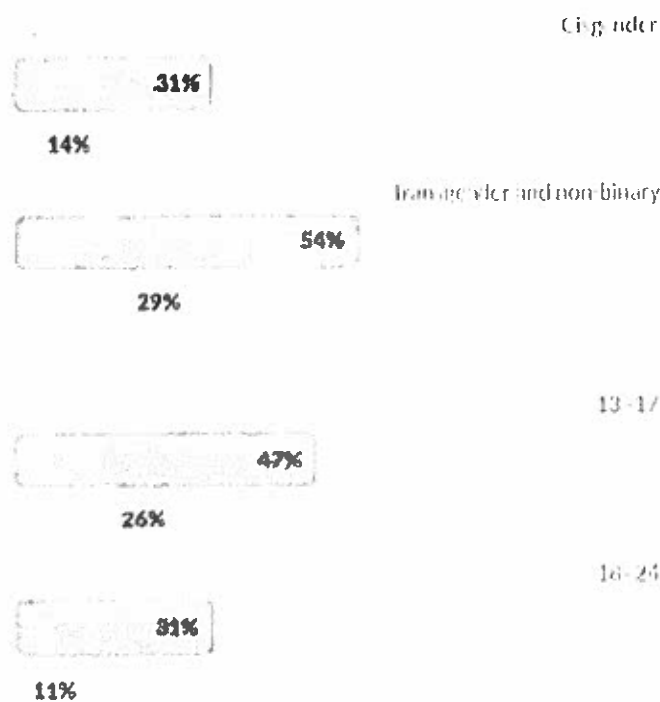
SUICIDALITY & MENTAL HEALTH

39% of LGBTQ respondents seriously considered attempting suicide in the past twelve months.

More than half of transgender and non-binary youth have seriously considered suicide.

LGBTQ youth that considered and attempted suicide:

Youth who attempted suicide among those who considered:



71% of respondents reported feeling sad or hopeless for at least two weeks in the past year

- Over 18% of LGBTQ respondents attempted suicide in the past twelve months
- 29% of transgender and non-binary youth respondents have attempted suicide
- 76% of the sample felt that recent politics impacted their mental health or sense of self
- 47% of the sample received psychological or emotional counseling from a mental health professional

To the State Department of Education,

My Name is Samy Beshai from South Brunswick NJ.

The law of LGBTQ curriculum is a direct assault on our parental and religious freedom. We want to have the right of teaching our kids. The schools should teach kids objective science and parents teach kids values or we will pull our kids from public schools.

We teach them and when they are older, they will choose for themselves. If you teach our children different values this will cause more conflict and confusion.

We pay taxes not to teach our children about sexual acts that go against my believes. Elementary and Middle schools' kids are too young to learn about this stuff, because they can't decide for themselves.

Allen McGinley
New Jersey Library Association
Co-Chair, NJLA/NJASL Joint Task Force on School Libraries
[REDACTED]

January 8, 2020

Topic: School Library Media Specialists

Good afternoon. My name is Allen McGinley and I am Director of the Teaneck Public Library in Bergen County and Co-Chair of the New Jersey Library Association's Joint Task Force on School Libraries. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today about the need for certified school library media specialists in New Jersey public schools.

School libraries with certified School Library Media Specialists have a measurable effect on the reading scores of students across the country.

They prepare students for success in college and careers by teaching the research, information, media, and digital literacy skills required for 21st century achievement.

Certified School Library Media Specialists lead and support technology integration, and have demonstrated success with introducing cutting edge technologies and practices into their schools, including coding, robotics, 3D printing, and gamification.

They are trained to develop current and diverse collections of print and digital materials that address a range of ability levels. And certified School Library Media Specialists create spaces within the school that are safe for all students and provide materials and activities to support social and emotional learning.

According to a 2015 study by Elizabeth Coker¹, students who attend schools with certified school library media specialists and quality school library facilities "perform better on standardized tests and are more likely to graduate, even after controlling for school size and student income level".

School library media specialists also promote literacy and inspire a lifelong love of reading, and connect teachers and students with materials in a variety of formats that encourage growth and knowledge. The result is that certified school library media specialists have a measurable impact on reading scores and overall student success.

¹ Coker, Elizabeth. *Certified Teacher-Librarians, Library Quality and Student Achievement in Washington State Public Schools*. Washington Library Media Association, 2015.
https://wala.memberclicks.net/assets/WLMA/Advocacy/wslitreport_final%20revised7_14_15.pdf

Despite this demonstrated need and impact, some school districts in New Jersey have eliminated certified school library media specialist positions resulting in districts where school library media specialists are responsible for teaching research and information literacy to thousands of students spread across different schools. And some districts, like Camden City School District, with a total student enrollment of more than 9,000, reported in March 2019² that **they have no school library media specialist at all.**

Unfortunately, this trend is continuing throughout the state. In March 2019, Newark Public School District in Essex County and Freehold Regional School District in Monmouth County reported student to school library media specialist ratios of more than 3,000:1.

And it gets worse. Woodbridge Township School District in Middlesex County and Union City Public School District in Hudson County reported ratios of more than 13,000:1.

The result is that students in these schools **do not have access** to the same tools and resources as students in nearby (typically more affluent) school districts, and face reduced opportunities for future success.

This is an equity issue.

According to the Coker study³, "students who are least likely to have access to a quality library are disproportionately more likely to face poverty and other risk factors known to adversely impact student achievement."

In July 2016, several prominent groups of college and university librarians released a joint statement⁴ saying, "access to a quality school library/media center staffed by a certified school media specialist is a necessary part of every student's education."

They go on to note that many incoming freshman are arriving on college campuses **unprepared** to perform college level research, requiring professors and librarians to spend more time than they should covering these *basic* research skills, because these students **did not have K-12 access** to a certified school library media specialist.

The lack of certified school library media specialists and an information literacy curriculum in New Jersey public schools has reached such a critical point, that the New Jersey legislature has started to take action.

² *NJ School Performance Report, 2017-2018* (reported March 2019), <https://rc.doe.state.nj.us/SearchForSchool.aspx>.

³ Coker, Elizabeth. *Certified Teacher-Librarians, Library Quality and Student Achievement in Washington State Public Schools*. Washington Library Media Association, 2015, https://wala.memberclicks.net/assets/WLMA/Advocacy/wslitreport_final%20revised7_14_15.pdf

⁴ *The Value and Importance of Highly Effective School Library Programs*, July 2016, <http://unlockstudentpotential.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/The-Value-and-Importance-of-Highly-Effective-School-Library-Programs.pdf>

Two bills have been introduced in both the Senate and the Assembly that would work in tandem to ensure that all students have **equal access** to a certified school library media specialist, and the opportunity to develop critical information literacy skills.

A132 / S2933 requires instruction on information literacy in curriculum of students in grades kindergarten through 12.

A1995 / S2394 requires a specific ratio of certified school library media specialists to students in New Jersey public schools.

These bills were introduced in the 2018-2019 legislative year, and gained broad support and sponsorship. We're currently waiting for these bills to be reintroduced in the new legislative session that is beginning now. The New Jersey legislature is taking action on this critical issue.

But the New Jersey legislature shouldn't have to legally mandate what we already know every student deserves.

The reason I'm here today is to ask the State Board of Education to review and strengthen the administrative code and QSAC guidelines so that all New Jersey public school students are ensured equal access to school library services.

While the administrative code and QSAC guidelines require that school districts provide school library services in each school building, they do not require that each school building have a certified school library media specialist.

Please consider changes to this language that would require an information literacy curriculum, taught by a certified school library media specialist in each school building.

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IT'S A NEW DAY FOR NJ

TRICIA FLANAGAN FOR U.S. SENATE

Tricia Flanagan
[REDACTED]
Lawrenceville, NJ
Tricia@FlanaganForSenate.org

January 9, 2020

New Jersey Department of Education
Trenton, NJ 08625

RE: NJ State Senate Bill 1569

Ladies & Gentlemen, Members of the Board,

I'm here to speak to you today regarding NJ State Senate Bill 1569 as both a NJ Candidate for the United States Senate, and as a mother of three children who is deeply concerned by the recent LGBTQ Curriculum mandates of the NJ Department of Education.

As a United States Senate Candidate, I'm actively working to form a Constitution Caucus to preserve the Constitutional Rights of all New Jerseyans. This includes the direct and sovereign First Amendment Constitutional Right to freedom OF religion, not freedom FROM religion. The stark contrast between this First Amendment Right and that of the mandated LGBTQ Curriculum agenda is clearly disturbing and presents a direct conflict, the remedy to which can only be found in the preservation of parental rights and decisions to ensure parents — and parents alone — make the decision as to what exposure and curriculum is taught to their children regarding any matter involving the discussion of sexuality. Anything less results in the imposition of a State mandate denying parents their Constitutional Rights.

As a mother, I'm writing to you at the shock and outrage of the material in question. Just a simple and esoteric reading of only some of the detail presented to children — and they are children — is appalling and clearly against Christian beliefs and teachings as well as against other religious beliefs. All Americans have the Right to practice their Religion. Every parent has the Right to decide what their children are taught and the right to deny any curriculum that opposes their religious belief.

This balance is the very fabric of our Country's foundation, and the NJ Department of Education's mandated inclusion of LGBTQ material fully denies Parents their Constitutional Rights.

Our Constitutional Rights must be protected. This is still America.

Thank you,

Tricia Flanagan
NJ Parent, Candidate for U.S. Senate

Dear Board of Education mMembers

My name is Fady Georgy, CPA, I am here as a parent of two beautiful girls, they mean the entire life.

1. As a father I have the right and duty to care of my own child. The children belong to their parents, NOT the government.
2. I believe as a father I have the right and duty to care of my children and make the decisions about what they learn in school and how they learn it. It is a violation to our freedoms clearly stated in the U.S Constitution to teach my children about lifestyles that go against our family values, our faith, and our religious practices.
3. I am a Bible believing Christian. I believe that mature themes and facts about sex need to be taught at home, most certainly not in everyday school lesson plans.
4. The HOLY WORD of GOD says that God created each person either male or female; however, the LGBT "history" will deny this fact and teach the contrary. This is a complete stripping of my faith, my religious liberty and my parental right to decide what my child can be taught.
5. My tax dollars should not be used to teach any child about different ways people choose to have sex.
6. As I read in the news, you used my tax money in developing a Pilot program, which is 45 lessons to teach students about the contributions of LGBTQ people. AND the second set of 60 lesson plans will be released focusing on NJ-specific LGBTQ figures be taught in 12 schools selected from 50 schools!!!!
7. I can't imagine teaching students 60 lesson about the LGBTQ's contributions. I have the math book for 6th Grade, it contains about ~~72~~ lessons. I am not expecting the students will cover all of them.

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Marriage is the union of one man and one woman. This is what nature and nature's God teaches. The school cannot teach "history" that contradicts this fact. Please stop the LGBT curriculum from being implemented.

Thank you for your time

(22)

Russo, Stephanie

From: Fady Georgy, CPA [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2020 3:50 PM
To: statebd
Subject: [EXTERNAL] LGBTQ curriculum to be stopped

Hello Mrs. Goldenberg,

As per our conversation on January 8 during the public hearing. As I heard from the other speakers complaining about no teacher hired, low transportation services, low public library services and insufficient fund for special needs.

I clarified in my speech that based on what I read in the news that our tax dollar goes to support the LGBTQ curriculums such data collection and analysis, development of engaging lessons across all subject areas, a statewide educators conference, curriculum coaches who will answer questions and evaluate teachers presenting classes along with ongoing professional development training. In addition to the indirect cost to challenge us and standing for supporting their position.

It looks like the government is abusing our tax dollar in developing, training and coaching the teachers to be ready for the LGBTQ curriculum; instead of supporting special needs students, improving the school service by hiring teacher and improving the transportation services and library services!!

below is the link I mentioned during my speech.

we kindly appreciate your help in stopping this curriculum before taking any further action.

Thank you
Fady Georgy, CPA

<https://nj1015.com/these-12-schools-will-be-first-in-nj-to-teach-lgbtq-curriculum/>

Dear Board of Education Members,

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Hello, My Name is Nancy Georgy, I am here as parent of two beautiful girls , they mean the world to me.

I have a lot to say about the new curriculum but I would summarize it as much as I can.

I am a firm believer that it is every parents God given right and duty to care for their children and make the decisions about what they learn in school and how they learn it. It is the parent responsibility not the school. *with regards to sexuality*

I think every parents should be free to choose what values and faith ~~should be~~ their kids learn. The kids go to school to get education not to change their beliefs. Every belief should be respected, ~~Though~~ the LGBT curriculum is opposing my Christian faith. In my faith, a marriage is between a man and a woman who will have a special holly private relationship. I don't want to send my kids to school learning something different. The Religious values should be left to each family to decide what they want to teach their kids.

I believe that the mature themes and the facts about sex need to be taught at home according to each family in their own timing and information. It is also steeling the innocence of the kids. Let the kids be Kids please. It is Only the parents of the child who can talk to him/her, *with facts about sexual* ~~about it~~ in the amount / time they see it is appropriate for the age.

The 1st Amendment says: (Congress shall make no law respecting as establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of people peaceably to assemble.: and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. "The LGBT curriculum is disrespecting both my religion and my faith. We are here today to peacefully assemble and petition you all for redress of this curriculum.

At the end I am respectfully requesting the cancellation of this curriculum.

Thanks for your time.

Dear New Jersey State Board of Education,

RE: LGBT mandated curriculum

State lawmakers ignored the comments of their constituents and instead bowed to the pressure of a powerful LGBT lobbying group, Garden State Equality, to push their belief of sexuality upon our impressionable students – our children and grandchildren.

The mandated curriculum requirements will now require textbook authors to speculate about the sexual preferences and gender-identity of noteworthy historical figures and then impose this false narrative on our children in public schools. A person's significant historical contributions should not be predicated on their sex life or personal feelings about their sexual identity. The endless obsession with sexuality should not be forced upon children.

Sexual relationships and identity are normally taught in health class with a parental opt-out, which means parents can excuse their children from these requirements. Now, parental rights are being trampled and our children are being forced to learn about sexual ideology throughout potentially all subject areas without allowing the parents the opportunity to opt their children out!

Sexuality is a private matter and only parents have the right to decide when and how their children learn about it. The sexual indoctrination of our children must end.

This law violates the fundamental and constitutional rights of parents to direct the moral and educational upbringing of their children. It was written with no protections for families—families cannot opt their child out of the content for any reason, not even if they have religious or moral objections! This is a clear violation of the religious liberties of public school families! This law forces sexual ideology and its indoctrination onto the minds and hearts of our children – again, without parental recourse. This law encourages revisionist history and teaches children they're no more than the sum of their sexual desires and feelings.

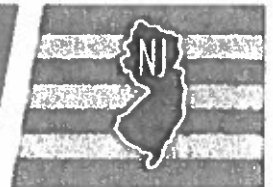
Sincerely,

Shawn Hyland
Director of Advocacy

1977 N Olden Avenue, Suite 241
Trenton, NJ 08618

P 866.655.4545

UNLEASHING CITIZENSHIP
FamilyPolicyAlliance.com/NewJersey



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NJ State Board of Education
8 January 2019
Save Our Schools NJ
Testimony on proposed regulations changes to 6A:8

Thank you to the State Board of Education for taking testimony today on the proposed regulations changes to 6A:8, regarding high school graduation. Save Our Schools NJ (SOSNJ) is a statewide grassroots parents organization of over 34,000 members, advocating for fair and equitable public education for all children.

SOSNJ is in support of the proposed regulations changes to the high school exit requirements. While we do not support exit testing in general for myriad reasons, the issue at hand is the fairness to current high school freshman and those classes that come after. At this time, there is no pathway to graduation for them and it is critical that those students and their parents understand what is expected of them under the current state statute and, hopefully, these regulations.

We support maintaining the menu of test alternatives and the portfolio review because students' achievement varies so widely from student to student. In recent years, far too few students have been able to use the state test to graduate. Other avenues must remain available.

Anna Polozzo

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, my name is Linda Hess, a tax payer and a very concerned grandmother of three grandchildren, two of which live with me. I don't agree with the LGBT in the school's and changing the books. Each parent has the right, according to the 1st amendment from things that would harm them. These are our children, we came so far when it comes to rights in America, and they should not be able to take it away from us. Young people are too innocent and need protecting. I feel this is the parents job. We birth these children into this world not the state. We definitely feel this would be detrimental to the children and their future, to the children to be exposed to this curriculum. We are taught to love All God's children and respect our fellow citizens. I plan on doing everything in my power to protect them from this. We live in a Democracy we have rights and this is taking our rights away. AND now brothers and sisters one final thing Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and are worthy of praise. Philippians 4:8