Material Challenges in Maine Schools and School Libraries  
2003-2009

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2009

Material Challenged: **Running with Scissors** by Augusten Burroughs  
Institution: Telstar Middle & High School Library  
Location: Bethel, Maine  
Complainant(s): parent  
Complaint: unsuited to age group (6th grade): parent thinks book is inappropriate for sixth graders  
Date: May 2009  
Result: parent was offered reconsideration form but decided not to pursue formal challenge

Material Challenged: **Holes** by Louis Sachar  
Institution: Connors Emerson School Classroom  
Location: Bar Harbor, Maine  
Complainant(s): parents  
Complaint: unsuited to age group (5th grade) & not quality literature: parents did not think book was appropriate for fifth grade class read aloud, wanted teacher to read from "classic" canon  
Date: March 2009  
Result: parents were offered reconsideration form but they decided not to pursue formal challenge

Material Challenged: **Cosmo Girl; Family Handyman; Four Wheeler; Hot Rod; Popular Mechanics; Popular Science; Transworld Motocross; Transworld Skateboarding; Transworld Snowboarding**  
Institution: Biddeford Middle School Library  
Location: Biddeford, Maine  
Complainant(s): school staff member  
Complaint: concern about messages primarily in magazine advertisements regarding drugs, smoking, alcohol and sexual activity unsuited to age group (middle school)  
Date: January 2009  
Result: all magazines were retained

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2008

Material Challenged: **Names Will Never Hurt Me** by Jamie Adoff  
Institution: Sacopee Valley Middle School Library  
Location: Hiram, Maine  
Complainant(s): parent  
Complaint: -  
Date: September 2008 (reported)  
Result: book was challenged by parent, reconsideration form was sent but not returned

Material Challenged: **The Boyfriend List** by E. Lockhart  
Institution: Searsport Middle School Library  
Location: Searsport, Maine  
Complainant(s): parent  
Complaint: -  
Date: July 2008 (reported)  
Result: book was challenged by parent but was retained in library
Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2007

Material Challenged: Deogratias by J.P. Stassen
Institution: King Middle School Library
Location: Portland, Maine
Complainant(s): student
Complaint: sexual violence & racial/ethnic bias & unsuited to age group (6th grade): student was "disgusted" by the material, believes "others would be too" and wants school to "take it out of the library"
Date: 2006
Result: formal challenge form was completed but student changed mind about formal challenge

Material Challenged: The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks
Institution: Longfellow Elementary School Library
Location: Portland, Maine
Complainant(s): certified SLMS
Complaint: racial/ethnic bias
Date: December 2007
Result: book was removed by certified school library media specialists because book contained outdated stereotypes of Native Americans

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2006

Material Challenged: Executioner's Song by Norman Mailer
Institution: Community High School Library
Location: Fort Kent, Maine
Complainant(s): unsuited to age group (9th grade)
Complaint: parent
Date: October 2006
Result: -

Material Challenged: Girl Interrupted by Susanna Kaysen
Institution: Orono High School Classroom
Location: Orono, Maine
Complainant(s): profanity & graphic sexuality "pornographic" & unsuited to age group (9th grade)
Complaint: parent
Date: February 2006
Result: book was removed from classroom, reviewed by committee and returned to classroom

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2005

None reported

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2004

Material Challenged: Please Don't Kill the Freshman by Zoe Trope
Institution: King Middle School Library
Location: Portland, Maine
Complainant(s): parent
Complaint: graphic sexuality & unsuited to age group (6th grade)
Date: December 2004
Result: book was challenged by parent, reconsideration form was sent but not returned
Material Challenged: **Catcher in the Rye** by J.D. Salinger
Institution: Noble High School Classroom
Location: North Berwick, Maine
Complainant(s): parent
Complaint: **immoral & unsuited to age group** (9th grade)
Date: December 2004
Result: book was retained on reading list & committee also recommended that schools provide information regarding classroom material selection and alternate reading in case of parental objection

Material Challenged: **Guinness World Records 2002**
Institution: Orland Consolidated School
Location: Orland, Maine
Complainant(s): school staff member
Complaint: **graphic sexuality**: staff member complained that pop culture represented in the back of the book was too sexual for young children. Some boys had been chasing each other on the playground with the picture of Britney Spears(p.37) and kissing the picture.
Date: December 2004
Result: staff member and librarian spoke about ways to handle inappropriate behavior on playground; book retained in library

Material Challenged: **Inside Out** by Terry Trueman
Institution: York Middle School
Location: York, Maine
Complainant(s): parent
Complaint: **profanity & unsuited to age group**: parent thought access to book should be limited due to profane language and mature theme
Date: December 2004
Result: -

Material Challenged: **Ranna 1/2** by Rumiko Takahashi
Institution: King Middle School
Location: Portland, Maine
Complainant(s): school staff member
Complaint: **graphic sexuality**: staff member complained about some of the illustrations in the graphic novel, which had been vandalized to show sexual body parts
Date: October 2004
Result: library staff met with each student who had checked graphic novel out that year to discuss destruction of school property and sexual harassment; guilty party was revealed and disciplined; vandalized graphic novel was discarded and replaced

Material Challenged: **It's So Amazing: A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies and Families** by Robie Harris and illustrated by Michael Emberley
Institution: South Hiram Elementary School Library
Location: South Hiram, Maine
Complainant(s): parent
Complaint: **graphic sexuality & unsuited to age group** (elementary school)
Date: September 2004
Result: book was retained in library; letter was written and sent to parents explaining how material selection policy

Material Challenged: **Secrets in the Fire** by Henning Mankel
Institution: Falmouth Middle School Library
Location: , Maine
Complainant(s): school staff member
Complaint: **unsuited for age group** (5th grade) & **graphic violence**: staff member took book away from student claiming that topic (effects of landmines) was inappropriate (too violent) for fifth graders
Date: Spring 2004
Result: librarian spoke with staff member; book was retained in library

Material Challenged: Nickelodeon, Ride BMX, Sports Illustrated, Teen People, Transworld
Motocross, Transworld Skateboarding
Institution: Rockland District Middle School Library
Location: Rockland, Maine
Complainant(s): -
Complaint: graphic sexuality & profanity
Date: Spring 2004
Result: committee reviewed magazines as per district challenge policy and decided to remove some and retain others; superintendent agreed with committee’s decision; school board voted to remove all magazines, overriding committee’s decision

Material Challenged: Switch Bitch by Roald Dahl
Institution: Connors Emerson School Classroom
Location: Bar Harbor, Maine
Complainant(s): parents
Complaint: graphic sexuality & unsuited to age group (8th grade): two short stories from collection were read aloud in eighth grade class; materials was challenged as "sexually graphic" and inappropriate for students
Date: January 2004
Result: teacher apologized to parents for assigning collection of sexually graphic short stories

Material Challenged: Holes by Louis Sachar
Institution: C.K. Burns School Classroom
Location: Saco, Maine
Complainant(s): parent
Complaint: unsuited to age group (4th grade) & immoral & violence & not quality literature: parent objected to book being read aloud in fourth grade class, questioned book’s morality, complained of violence—-that book is more violent than movie--and thought book was not quality literature
Date: January 2004
Result: -

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2003

Material Challenged: Princess Diaries by Meg Cabot
Institution: Berwick Academy
Location: South Berwick, Maine
Complainant(s): parent
Complaint: -
Date: March 2003
Result: parent did not want to pursue formal complaint after being given paperwork