

Twitter Thread by Judd Legum



Judd Legum

@JuddLegum



1. Florida teachers are being told to remove all books from their classroom libraries OR FACE FELONY PROSECUTION

The new policy is based on the premise that teachers are using books to "groom" students or indoctrinate them with leftist ideologies.

2. Officials from the Manatee County School District confirmed the new policy to <https://t.co/GI6evXRDcZ>.

The policy was communicated to principals in a meeting last Wednesday.

Teachers are in the process of being informed now.

Per the new statutory changes to HB 1467 – January 2023

Per the new statutory changes to House Bill 1467 - Section 1006.40 (3) (d), F.S. All material in school and classroom libraries or included on a reading list must be:

1. Free of Pornography and material prohibited under S. 847.012, F.S.
2. Suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the material presented.
3. Appropriate for the grade level and age group for which the materials are used and made available.

Each elementary school must publish on its website, in a searchable format prescribed by the department, a list of all materials maintained in the school library media center or required as part of a school or grade-level reading list.

Penalty for Violating Section 847.012, F.S. Any person violating any provision of this section commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in S. 775.082, S. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

To protect librarians and media specialist, it must be clear that a book depicting nudity, sexual conduct, or sexual excitement does not meet the tenets of "Harmful to minors" (s.847.001, F.S.).

Therefore, each district in the State of Florida must comply with these new statutory requirements. We are seeking volunteers to assist with vetting and compiling website list so all classroom books can be used by students.

3. Teachers in Manatee County lamented the news on social media. "My heart is broken for Florida students today as I am forced to pack up my classroom library," one Manatee teacher wrote on Facebook.



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My heart is broken for Florida students today as I am forced to pack up my classroom library. Due to the new law that went into effect on December 31st all Manatee Teachers must remove all books that have not been "vetted" by the state or risk being charged with a a THIRD DEGREE FELONY and losing our license. This applies to both public and government funded charter schools.

The vetting process for new books is cumbersome, so even accepting donated books from parents and community members will not be allowed. The process of finding the list of approved books is also incredibly difficult.

4. Another Manatee teacher called the directive "a travesty to education" that interfered with efforts to "connect with books and develop [a] love of lifelong learning."



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Farewell, classroom library. We'll see you soon, I promise. 😞📚 #SaveOurLibraries #TrustTeachers #readersareleaders #desantass #florida

As an educator, I have spent the past 18 years of my life dedicated to providing students with quality literature. Helping them connect with books and develop of love of lifelong learning. Receiving notice today that classroom libraries are to be dismantled is a travesty to education, the future of our children and our nation.



5. The new policy in Manatee, which is likely to be duplicated across Florida, was issued in response to HB 1467, which was signed into law by DeSantis last March.

That law established that teachers could not be trusted to select books appropriate for their students.

6. Instead, all books in libraries or used in classroom instruction must be selected by a "media specialist" (aka, a librarian).

This means that classroom libraries that are curated by teachers, not librarians, are now illegal.

<https://t.co/SzHzgellgw>

7. The Manatee County School District is mandating that teachers make their classroom libraries inaccessible until they can establish that each book is approved by a librarian

Some teachers packed up their classroom libraries. Others covered up the books with construction paper



8. Restoring student access to classroom libraries is a complex process. First, someone must cross-check each book in their classroom library with the district library catalog

Any book not currently held in the district libraries must be evaluated and approved by a librarian

9. And that's just the beginning. Materials prepared for an upcoming Manatee County School Board meeting include a 21-point list of procedures to ensure that classroom libraries comply with the new rules.

Classroom Libraries



Role	Responsibility
Classroom Teachers or Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search Destiny and district created list for all books included in classroom library For any books listed in Destiny or on the district created list, no further action is required Any books not listed in Destiny or on the district created list, complete the "Reading Lists" survey to submit to the school media specialist (the survey will include the title and author of the book)
School Media Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support teachers with searching Destiny and district created list for classroom library titles Compile the list of books teachers submit in the "Reading Lists" survey in an Excel spreadsheet Review books submitted through the survey to determine if the book can be retained in the classroom library (per Collection Development Policies contained within the state Library Media Training) Communicate any books that would need to be removed from a classroom library to the principal and remove the title from the "Reading Lists" school spreadsheet Turn the Excel spreadsheet into a PDF Send the PDF to the principal for posting on the school website
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all teachers in the building complete the "Reading Lists" survey for books included in their classroom library that are not searchable in Destiny or on the district created list Communicate any titles of books to teachers that the media specialist has determined need to be removed Additional school-based purchases of books, e-books, videos, periodicals that are not in Destiny, found on the classroom library list, or purchased by the District must be included in a PDF document by title and author and have been reviewed by the media specialist Ensure the PDF list of books (classroom library and additional school-based purchases) are posted to the school website (must include title and author)
District Elementary Curriculum Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile a list of all books that came with Benchmark Advance in addition to what is included in the student consumables Compile a list of all books listed in the B.E.S.T. Standards Compile a list of books that are part of Literacy Footprints, Literacy Footprints Intervention Kit, and the Literacy Footprints Digital Reader Collaborate with District Title 1 department to compile a list of books that have been purchased and sent to Title 1 schools Collaborate with ESOL to compile a list of books purchased for Dual Language Classrooms Create a running list of District purchased books by title and author to post on the district website (including B.E.S.T. Standards books) Have the list linked to each school's website Any future purchase of books (including e-books, periodicals, or videos) by the district will be reviewed and approved by the District Media Specialist and added to the published list on both the district website and school websites

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10. As a result, one Manatee teacher reported being forced to take Sneezy the Snowman and Dragons Love Tacos off the shelves pending review. Other teachers, fearing criminal liability, are telling students not to bring in "unvetted" books from home.



...

My kids classroom libraries are all packed up and my kids aren't allowed to bring their own books or read from e-reader apps.

11. Librarians in Manatee County are now expected to review thousands of books in classroom libraries to ensure compliance with the new law. Any mistake could result in criminal charges. Manatee has 64 public schools and 3,000 teachers, many of whom maintain classroom libraries.

12. Are you interested in this thread?

Hey, you made it this far.

Prediction: YOU'LL BE EVEN MORE INTERESTED IN OUR NEWSLETTER.

■ More accountability journalism

■ More in-depth research

- More punctuation

And

- It's free to sign up

<https://t.co/TfpCltVSo>

13. The librarian's review of classroom books must also be consistent with a complex training, which was heavily influenced by right-wing groups like Moms For Liberty and approved by the Florida Department of Education just last week.



Library Media and Instructional Materials Training



Rule 6A-7.0715, F.A.C. Effective February 2023

www.FLDOE.org

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14. Popular Information asked Manatee Schools Chief of Staff Kevin Chapman if librarians & teachers were expected to remove books that violated the Parental Rights In Education Act, known as "Don't Say Gay" or the Stop WOKE Act, which limits classroom discussion of racial issues

15. Chapman did not answer the question, saying only that librarians are expected to apply the training issued by the Florida Department of Education last week.

That training, Chapman says, includes "new definitions of inappropriate material."

16. "Don't Say Gay" prohibits all instruction on "sexual orientation or gender identity" in K-3 classrooms and instruction in other grades that is "not age appropriate or developmentally appropriate." But the law applies only to "[c]lassroom instruction" — not library books.

17. The Stop WOKE Act is also limited to classroom instruction.

The teacher training approved by the Florida Department of Education, however, does not inform librarians that "Don't Say Gay" and "Stop WOKE" do not apply to library books.

18. Rather, librarians are told: "There is some overlap between the selection criteria for instructional and library materials." One slide says that library books and instructional materials cannot include "unsolicited theories that may lead to student indoctrination."



Common Selection Criteria for Instructional Materials, Library Materials and Reading Lists

Factors to consider for any material include:

- Avoiding unsolicited theories that may lead to student indoctrination.

19. A subsequent slide provides a list of "unsolicited theories that may lead to student indoctrination," which includes information about "sexual orientation or gender identity." It also includes a variety of topics related to race.

20. The training instructs librarians to "err on the side of caution."

As Popular Information reported earlier this month, Manatee County schools have already removed several books from school libraries because they contain LGBTQ characters or themes.

<https://t.co/mppSnprpSh>

21. Thanks for making to the end of this thread.

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<https://t.co/TfpCltdVSo>