

SB 1098

Passage of SB 1098 is imperative to protect the diverse content of materials available to children through their school libraries.

I live within the boundaries of Tillamook School District 9. In August 2024, the school board voted 3/1 to remove the award winning book *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez from the curriculum. This book is part of the state approved 10th-grade ELA instructional materials. The author chronicles, through fiction, the adjustment of four Hispanic sisters to life in the United States (New York City). It was used the previous year with no dissent. If a student or parent was uncomfortable with the book, they had the option of choosing another.

The review process was conducted contrary to school board policy: from the acceptance of a verbal complaint (no written complaint was ever filed), to the summary removal of the classroom set of books prior to committee review and recommendation, through a staged public out-of-context excerpt reading at the August school board meeting. Staged because the school board does not usually accept public input on agenda/action items.

The reason for the removal of this book from the curriculum was cited as inappropriate content. However, the removal created a cultural gap in a school that is 26% Hispanic. If SB 1098 had been in effect in 2024, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* would still be on the classroom book shelf for reading, discussion, and cultural experience confirmation.

SB 1098 could be improved by:

- *Adding language to the effect that approved materials may not be removed if removal will create a cultural gap;
- *Requiring that time must be allowed for public input, beyond that of the review committee, at a school board meeting and prior to a review committee recommendation.

Regards,

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