

Submitter: Kate Lasky  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

To Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Weber, and members of the committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 1098, a commonsense measure that upholds fairness and nondiscrimination in how school library books and instructional materials are selected. This bill also creates a new position within the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to support school librarians as they navigate an increasing number of book challenges.

As a parent, I believe decisions about what my child reads should be mine—not the school board's. In Grants Pass School District 7, board members have attempted to remove books without following established procedures, disregarding the expertise of the district's only certified librarian. Had SB 1583 passed last session, it would have prevented this overreach and preserved the proper review process for books like *Flamer* and *All Boys Aren't Blue*.

Book bans and censorship are fundamentally undemocratic. The First Amendment guarantees both the right to free speech and the right to receive information — protections that apply to students as well. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that students do not “shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.” It is not the role of government entities to remove books simply because some individuals object to their content.

Library and education professionals — not politicians — should determine school collections. Trained librarians ensure students have access to well-vetted, diverse materials while respecting the values of all families. The new position at ODE will provide essential guidance to schools, helping them navigate book challenges fairly and professionally.

SB 1098 does not limit a parent's ability to guide their own child's reading — it prevents one group from imposing its beliefs on all families. I urge your support to protect fairness, parental rights, and professional decision-making in education.

Sincerely,

Kate Lasky  
Grants Pass, Oregon

District 2