

January 11, 2013

Michelle Beus
Davis School District
45 East State Street
Farmington, Utah 84025

Dear Ms. Beus;

On May 8, 2012, the District Reconsideration Committee issued a decision placing the book *In Our Mothers' House*, by Patricia Polacco, in a parent resource section of the library and requiring written parental permission for a student to check the book out of the library.

District policy identifies the procedures for addressing questions, concerns, or complaints from a patron regarding instructional materials or supplemental enrichment books or information. The procedures require the committee to submit a written summary of recommendations to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum for final disposition of the material under review. This final step was not implemented in this particular situation.

To fulfill the last step in the process, and at the advice of counsel, I have now reviewed the process and the Committee's decision to assure that decision was made in compliance with established policies and procedures.

I have considered the written summary and recommendations of the District Reconsideration Committee. I agree with and support the Committee's conclusions regarding the book as follows:

- "Removing the book completely is not a good option."
- "We all know many non-traditional families" with students attending our schools.
- "It could help those children in same sex families see their family in a book."
- "[T]his book teaches acceptance and tolerance."
- "The book could help prevent bullying of kids from same sex families."
- "It could be used by a family to discuss the issues . . ."

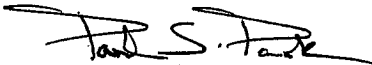
The Committee considered the applicability of Utah Code §53A-13-101, in deciding whether to remove or restrict access to *In Our Mothers' House*. The book has never been recommended or used as instructional material and therefore, the statute does not require removal or restriction of the book.

The District recognizes a parent's right to direct the upbringing of his/her own children. Under Utah law, a parent/guardian of a student who determines that the student's participation in an activity would be contrary to the student's (or parent's) belief or right of conscience may request a waiver of participation for their own student.

The Committee's decision to retain *In Our Mothers' House* in the library and accommodate individual parental rights to determine whether or not their own student may check the book out shall stand. However, the method for accommodating parental rights can be accomplished in a less restrictive way. The District's computerized library system is capable of maintaining individual parent requests to limit their child's access to particular materials. With this system, parents may ensure that their child does not check out material which a parent has determined is not appropriate for their own child.

Therefore, *In Our Mothers' House* will be returned to the general circulation shelf appropriate to the intended reading level in those District Libraries in which the book was previously placed. Rather than restricting access from all students absent affirmative parental permission, District policy will be applied to allow those parents who do not want their child to check the book out to notify their school librarian of that decision and the librarian will enter the requested restriction in the computerized library system.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pamela S. Park', written over a horizontal line.

Pamela S. Park
Assistant Superintendent