

Fairhope Public Library

Board Members

501 Fairhope Ave
Fairhope, AL 36532

Dear Members of the Fairhope Public Library Board,

I am writing to you as Chairman of the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) to formally notify you of the Board's decision following your recent request for reinstatement of state funding.

After a comprehensive review, the APLS Board voted that the Fairhope Public Library does not meet the requirements set forth in Chapter 520-2-2 of the Alabama Administrative Code, and as a result of this noncompliance, the Fairhope Public Library is not eligible to receive state aid. This decision was based on the Board's determination that multiple books which the library has chosen to retain in its youth sections contain sexually explicit content. Chapter 520-2-2 mandates that materials containing such content must be housed exclusively in adult sections.

The reviewed books include multiple works containing explicit sexual content, graphic sexual violence, incest, rape, and detailed sexual instruction. Many excerpts involve minors as characters, sexual acts described in explicit detail, or illustrations depicting sexual activity. These findings are documented in the attached report with book excerpts. A copy of that report is included with this letter. Please note that these excerpts represent only a small sample of the content contained in each book and are not an exhaustive list.

Notable examples reviewed by the Board include:

- ***Crank* (Ellen Hopkins)**, which includes a graphic rape scene describing forced penetration, physical injury, and bodily fluids, written in explicit sexual detail.
- ***Identical* (Ellen Hopkins)**, which depicts repeated incestuous sexual abuse between a father and his young daughter, including explicit sexual acts, manipulation, and graphic descriptions of bodily contact.
- ***The Handmaid's Tale* (Margaret Atwood)**, which includes explicit descriptions of sexual acts, rape, pornography, and sexual violence using graphic language and detailed narration.

- ***Doing It (Hannah Witton)***, which is marketed to teenage readers and contains detailed sexual instruction, explicit discussions of masturbation, orgasm, pornography, and encourages alcohol use as a means to explore sexual desires despite legal age restrictions.
- ***The Perks of Being a Wallflower (Stephen Chbosky)***, which contains detailed sexual scenes involving minors, including oral sex, nudity, intoxication, and coercive sexual behavior.

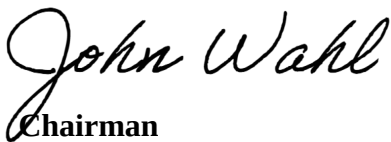
These passages narrate sexual acts in explicit detail and are not merely suggestive in nature. In addition, the review documented extensive and repeated use of vulgar, racial, and offensive language across the books evaluated. The F-word alone was used 184 times across the 11 titles. While the use of profanity alone does not automatically require removal under state code, its prevalence further underscores the unsuitability of these books for young readers.

This determination is not about banning books or restricting access. Adults, and the children of parents who grant them access to adult sections, remain free to read any material of their choosing. At the same time, relocating these books allows parents who do not wish for their children to be exposed to explicit sexual content to exercise that same right. The goal of every library should be to help everyone feel welcome, respected, and safe when visiting.

Sexuality is a deeply personal and sensitive topic, and as a society, we must acknowledge that people hold different perspectives on how it should be addressed with minors. The issue before the Board is parental rights, age appropriateness, statutory compliance, and the responsible use of taxpayer dollars. Children's sections exist to protect minors and to ensure that publicly funded institutions uphold reasonable standards.

State funding may be reinstated immediately upon confirmation that all sexually explicit content, as defined by the APLS Board and consistent with Chapter 520-2-2 of the Alabama Administrative Code, has been relocated from youth and children's sections to appropriate adult sections of the library. Once compliance is achieved, the APLS Board stands ready to reconsider funding without delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Wahl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chairman

Alabama Public Library Service Board