



FAQ: Parents and Sexually Explicit Material in School Libraries

- **I don't like this question and/or I do not think this question is appropriate. Will my child be able to start school if I do not answer the question?**

We understand that some parents may be uncomfortable with this question. If no answer to the question about sexually explicit materials is provided, your child will be permitted to enter school. Please note that the Virginia law and the local policy were intended to give parents the option of saying "no" to sexually explicit material being available to their child. If the parent gives no answer to this question, then sexually explicit material will be made available to their child. The parent must say "no" if they want sexually explicit material to be withheld.

- **Why does the Spotsylvania County Public School division have sexually explicit books in the libraries?**

That's a great question. For many years in our school division and others, books have been added to our school libraries on the basis of brief summary information provided by publishers and/or book vendors. The summaries we have relied upon have not consistently indicated whether or not the individual books have included sexually explicit content. Books with sexually explicit content have made it into our school libraries because they have not been reliably described or accurately represented with regard to such content. We are finding sexually explicit books in our secondary libraries. Because there are about 400,000 books in our libraries, the process to remove them from school libraries takes time. Our librarians have been removing sexually explicit books from our school libraries as they come across them.

- **By what authority are you asking parents this question?**

Policy IIA requires parents be notified of sexually explicit instructional material in their child's curriculum. Consistent with Virginia law and VDOE policy, SCPS wants parents to be informed and to be able to choose whether their child is enabled to access sexually explicit material.

- **Why is this question being asked of elementary school parents?**

Currently, we have more than 400,000 books in our school libraries with no way to guarantee parents that they are all completely free of sexually explicit materials. We want to be vigilant in honoring their wishes.

- **What is being done with the data collected?**

The choice parents make on sexually explicit content will be cataloged in Destiny, the school library system, to assist school librarians with vetting material that is made accessible to each child and to aid in the development of future policy concerning this topic.

- **I think this is strictly a family issue that needs to be addressed at home. What can I do?**

SCPS values parental involvement and respects parental choice. We have confirmed that the books withdrawn from our school libraries are available in the Central Rappahannock Regional Library collection. Parents can access the books at the public libraries if they want to read and discuss them with their child.

- **I trust my child to make the right decision about what books they read. Why do I need to choose yes or no?**

We are happy you trust your child's judgment. If you choose "yes" all materials will be made available to your child.