Parents have put several books in RSD school libraries under official review, claiming they contain pornography and references to violence and drugs.

**Under Review**

Challenged Books

- “Where I End and You Begin” by Preston Norton
- “Gender Queer” by Maia Kobabe
- “All Boys Aren’t Blue” by George M. Johnson
- “The Haters” by Jesse Andrews
- “Crank” by Ellen Hopkins
- “Looking for Alaska” by John Green
- “This One Summer” by Mariko Tamaki
- “Heroine” by Mindy McGinnis
- “The Breakaways” by Cathy G. Johnson

Parents have put several books in RSD school libraries under official review, claiming they contain pornography and references to violence and drugs.

**Librarian Perspective**

Brittany Sharratt, librarian, said none of the book challenges have come from RSD parents. “These challenges have all come from parents who have kids at different school levels,” Sharratt said. “I think those parents are just feeling a little disempowered about when their students will become high school students, what the OHS have access to.”

Sharratt is on the book challenge committee consisting of “Closet” and John Green. While Sharratt understands that caring multiple perspectives and dialogue over the library books is important, she said if students are ever bothered by content they find, they can choose not to read it.

“The librarians know that not all books are intended for every reader, but we also strive to give them a voice and a chance to express their concerns regarding the process of challenging books and the books themselves,” Sharratt said.

Christian Eldridge, RSD parent, is concerned about the content of the books available to students in libraries, specifically those with pornography and sexual content. “It represents an alarming agenda that targets youth hidden behind virtuous words such as diversity and inclusion,” Eldridge said during parent comments at the RSD meeting. “We must welcome children of all identities into our libraries and there can be no books that do that. What I am deeply concerned about is the large number of books sitting on our library shelves with the agenda of sexually ruining our children.

**Student Perspective**

Aadhya Subbath, senior, talked about the issue of banning books from school during an AP Literature discussion for ‘Native Son’ by Richard Wright.

“One of the best things about reading books that do contain sensitive topics is we’re being exposed to problems that really do affect real-world situations,” Subbath said. “Rather than being sheltered by it, it’s better to receive a formal education like this, so we’re not just navigating through this in our home, but with the help of teachers and other educational material.”

Subbath said parents may be concerned that books with violence or sensitive topics such as assault or drug usage have a negative impact on their child.

“I think parents can obviously restrict what books they want their children to read, but they shouldn’t restrict them from everyone else,” Subbath said.

**Author Perspective**

One of the 12 books being challenged is ‘Heroine’ by Mindy McGinnis. McGinnis spoke to students at MHS earlier this year. One reason parents in the district have requested this book to be removed from school libraries is that “the content of the book is inappropriate for children of school age through twelfth grade.”

McGinnis, however, said that according to the CDC, heroin use more than doubled among young adults ages 18-25 in the past decade. "Real talk has to happen with teens about the very real dangers of casual drug use before they fall down a rabbit hole, and anyone who has ever considered the fact that it could be them one day." Photographs by Merin Elolio.

**Restriction Process**

1. Parents must first speak with their student’s teacher or librarian.
2. The librarian then restricts the student’s access to the particular book.
3. If the parent still feels the issue is unresolved, they can talk with the principal.

**Challenge Process**

1. In the case where the parent wants the book completely removed, they must fill out the challenged material form.
2. RSD then forms a committee consisting of teachers, librarians and students to review the book’s content and determine if it will be removed from school libraries.
3. The committee’s decision is presented to the Board of Education for final approval.

**Supreme Court Cases**

Minarcini v. Strongsville City School District

This 1976 case ruled that a library in a public school is created to benefit students and its content cannot be taken away by school boards because they disapprove of content.

Board of Education vs. Pico

This 1982 case ruled that librarians and other institutions do not have the discretion further than the classroom-environment to remove the library and the content that is stored in it.

Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education

This 1987 case ruled that religious themes taught in required reading is not required worship and is open to individual interpretation.