



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### ***Concerned Parent Reads Explicit Material at School Board Meeting***

*Erie County, NY:* Alarmed by the explicit material in books listed on a suggested reading assignment, two parents approached the Hamburg School Board at their meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup>. One parent read several excerpts from one of the books on the list, The Perks of Being a Wallflower. The book contains topics such as sexual abuse, masturbation, abortion, homosexual sex, forced oral sex and more. The other books on the assignment list also include topics like suicide, anal sex and more.

A mom in the district uncovered the assignment, which was sent directly to students in an advanced English 9 class at Hamburg High School, and sent it to Jackie Best, Chapter Chair of Moms for Liberty, Erie County, NY. Best also happens to have a child in the class, and was unaware of the assignment. After researching the 10 books on the list, the moms saw a common trend, mature topics explained in an explicit nature.

While the teacher does note on the assignment that '*Some of the books may contain sensitive topics,*' and that students should, "*..choose a book with a parent's guidance,*" Best does not feel that goes far enough. "There are multiple problems with the way this assignment was given," says Best. "First, the teacher knows there is mature content but does not share any details on what that content is, or which books contain what topic. Second, the assignment was given straight to the students without notifying the parents." Best feels that both of these decisions keep the parents in the dark about what their child is reading and potentially opens the child up to triggering material.

At the Hamburg School Board meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup>, Hamburg parent Steve Barber read from the text of one of the most controversial books on the list. The Perks of Being a Wallflower was the 10<sup>th</sup> most challenged book on the American Library Association's list of the 100 Most Banned/Challenged Books of 2000-2009. "These are things I never thought could happen at Hamburg," Barber said to the board after reading the excerpts. "...not in our school district." Barber continued, "I don't know anywhere where this book would be appropriate and I can't imagine the follow up with a student and the conversations that you would have afterwards."

The teacher was contacted by email by Best and stood by her book list. "I compiled the list with careful consideration for various student needs, abilities and interests," she wrote. "I have students ... for whom the content of ... really any book on this list is their reality, and I would be negligent if I didn't acknowledge and validate their experiences." Barber received a phone call from Superintendent Cornell on July 14<sup>th</sup> about the list. Cornell explained that these books have been on the list for years and no other parents have taken issue with them. He stated he has no intention of removing the books from the list.

As Chapter Chair of Moms for Liberty, Erie County, NY, Best explains they are not done fighting. "This happened at my son's school district. But it's most likely happening across our county. This is exactly why I created our Moms for Liberty Chapter and I intend to use this experience to empower other parents to ask questions and challenge the system."

The Erie County chapter of Moms for Liberty is dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by unifying, educating and empowering parents to defend their parental rights at all levels of government. For more information, or for a comprehensive list of Moms for Liberty chapters, visit [www.momsforliberty.org](http://www.momsforliberty.org)

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