

P.O. Box 816
Dover, Delaware 19903-0816

July 9, 2014

Cape Henlopen Board of Education
Cape Henlopen School District
1270 Kings Highway
Lewes, Delaware 19958

Via FAX and E-mail

Dear Members of the Board:

On behalf of the membership of the Delaware Library Association, I am writing to express our dismay and concern about the recent decision to remove the novel *The Miseducation of Cameron Post* from the list of summer reading choices for in-coming 9th grade students attending Cape Henlopen High School and rumors recently made public that the use of Delaware's Blue Hen Award List will be suspended as a recommended summer reading list for students.

The Blue Hen Book Award is a children's choice award that is voted on by young people ages 1 to 17. The purpose of the Award is to entice children to read current popular literature and to have the experience of participating in an awards program. Books nominated for the Award must be published within the last three years and have been positively reviewed by at least two professional journals (such as "Booklist," "VOYA," "School Library Journal," etc.). All types of books may be nominated by students, parents, teachers, librarians and any member of the public. The Blue Hen booklist is intended for a broad range of readers as libraries serve communities that are comprised of all types of people and to accommodate many levels and interests. The list of nominated titles are then read and vetted by a committee of professional librarians who choose the titles to be included in three categories: Young Readers, Middle Readers, and Teen Readers. From this list, young people around the State cast their votes for their favorite title and the winner of the Blue Hen Book Award is announced at the annual library conference in May.

The Delaware Library Association supports the rights of all people to read. We support the concept and importance of family involvement in the choice of reading materials for their children. We understand that such choices are guided by the values that each family holds dear. Every family has a different set of values and no family has the right to dictate their values to another.

Not all books are appropriate for or of interest to all readers. Therefore, it is vital that any reading list be broad enough and have enough variety of titles, subject matter and interest levels to be able to meet the needs of and to encourage reading for all young people.

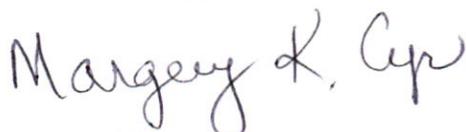
Cape Henlopen School District has a written and approved Policy which addresses steps to be taken should a challenge to its Instructional Methods, Materials and Supplies (Policy #110) be received. We are deeply concerned that this Policy was circumvented by the actions of the School Board. Challenged materials have the right to a full and complete hearing which offers the opportunity to look objectively at a book at its whole rather than subjectively based on isolated parts viewed through a prism of personal beliefs and values.

As a duly elected body, the public should be able to expect that the School Board will responsibly follow its own Policies.

We ask that the Board reconsider its earlier decision to remove *The Miseducation of Cameron Post* in view of these facts.

We further ask you to consider increasing the number of recommended titles to the summer reading list rather than decreasing the number of titles. An increase broadens reading opportunities for all; and creates a greater choice to meet more diverse needs. Doing so will send a message to your students and constituents that you support and encourage reading by all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margery K. Cyr". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Margery Kirby Cyr
Delaware Library Association
Intellectual Freedom Committee, Chairman