**Sample Email to School Board**

As a local taxpayer, [if relevant: parent/grandparent of school children in this district], published author, and member of the Authors Guild, the nation’s largest and oldest nonprofit association for professional writers, I am increasingly concerned about the growing number of school boards being pressured to ban certain books from school libraries or remove previously approved books from established curriculums by some parents or community groups. [Prior sentence can be revised if your school board has engaged in book banning to specify that you are concerned with their actions.]

At a time when the country has never been more polarized, it is hardly surprising that parents on both ends of the political spectrum may object to certain materials and ideas taught in public schools. Many schools today already offer students one or more alternative book titles if a parent has a concern about a particular assignment. A teacher or principal should encourage parents to exercise that option if they object strongly to a specific work, but that doesn’t mean that their complaint should disrupt what the rest of the class reads.

Unhappy people, of course, tend to be the loudest, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that they are speaking for the majority of people in the school district, which is why I urge you not to bow to such pressure. While parents have the right to decide what people, values, and beliefs they wish to expose their children to at home, U.S. law does not grant them the right to impose those decisions on other parents’ children.

Moreover, public and private K-12 schools alike must meet state and federal education mandates regarding what concepts, subjects, and skills children are expected to master before advancing to the next grade. School boards working in conjunction with trained, accredited principals, teachers, school librarians, and resources professionals, therefore, are in the best position to determine which texts are most effective and beneficial in helping students meet those mandates.

While it is appropriate for parents to have a forum in which to raise concerns or ask questions about the materials students encounter either in the classroom or at the school library, school boards should not permit parents and others to request that a book be banned unless they can demonstrate that they have read the entire text before doing so. This would reduce the number of challenges your school board may receive, freeing up valuable time to address other crucial items. Most school boards have implemented a review and evaluation process when a complaint has been lodged, and those procedures should be followed.

If you have not yet implemented such a process, the National Coalition Against Censorship, of which the Authors Guild is a proud member, has developed [some guidelines](https://ncac.org/news/blog/guidelines-school-officials) for doing so. Implementing such a process tells parents that you take their complaints seriously, but that banning quality resources from which students can learn will be done rarely and only after performing due diligence.

Best regards.

Insert Name, Town/City, contact info