



MEMO

Nick Grove

Library Director

PO Box 940

Meridian, ID 83680

director@mld.org

(208) 888-4451 x1010

TO: Jeffrey Kohler, Board Chair

FROM: Nick Grove, Library Director

CC: Meridian Library District Board of Trustees (the "Board")

DATE: 3/4/25

RE: Request for Reconsideration - *Let's Talk About It; Library Director Response and Recommendation*

Overview

On February 4, 2025, Meridian Library District ("District") staff received a Request for Reconsideration form regarding the book *Let's Talk About It* by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan (the "Material"). This Memo constitutes the Library Director's written response and recommended decision regarding the submitted Request for Reconsideration, as required by the District's Collection Development Policy (the "Policy"). More specifically, this Memo provides a synopsis of the Material, its circulation history, an analysis of the Material through the lens of the District's Collection Development Policy, and a recommendation to the Board for consideration and decision at the March 2025 monthly Board meeting.

Synopsis of the Material

Is what I'm feeling normal? Is what my body is doing normal? Am I normal? How do I know what are the right choices to make? How do I know how to behave? How do I fix it when I make a mistake?

Let's talk about it.

Growing up is complicated.

How do you find the answers to all the questions you have about yourself, about your identity, and about your body? *Let's Talk About It* provides a comprehensive, thoughtful, well-researched graphic novel guide to everything you need to know.

Covering relationships, friendships, gender, sexuality, anatomy, body image, safe sex, sexting, jealousy, rejection, sex education, and more, *Let's Talk About It* is the go-to handbook for every teen, and the first in graphic novel form.

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/605726/lets-talk-about-it-by-erika-moen-and-matt-hew-nolan/>

Requestor

The requestor is a resident within the boundaries of the Meridian Library District and has marked on the Request for Reconsideration form that they are a parent of the Minor who obtained the Material.

Request for Reconsideration Report

Staff Member: JP

Date: 2/24/2025

Director: Nick Grove

Formal Review Initiated

Per the District's [Collection Development Policy](#), when MLD receives a Request for Reconsideration for an item in the District's collection, the Library Director shall endeavor to submit to the Board a written response to the submission and a recommended Board decision within twenty-eight (28) days of receipt. The Board shall give the Library Director's written response and recommended decision substantial deference and endeavor to issue a written decision within sixty (60) days of receipt of the submission explaining the Board's rationale for approving or denying the submission. The Board can adopt the Library Director's written response and recommended decision as its own, with or without modification, or the Board can issue its own decision. Board deliberation must be done openly on the record at noticed Board meetings. As provided in the Policy, the Board shall always take the most narrowly-tailored action necessary.

The challenged material must be considered as a whole and individual passages cannot be taken out of context. Supporting materials should also inform the analysis. In determining whether material possesses serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value, the proper inquiry is not whether an ordinary member of any given community would find serious value in the allegedly obscene material, but whether a reasonable person would find such value in the material, taken as a whole.

This Memo constitutes the Library Director's written response and recommended decision regarding the submitted Request for Reconsideration.

Title: Let's Talk About It

Call Number: 306.7803 MOEN

Categorized in collection (i.e., Children, Youth, Adult): Teen Book - Teen Non-Fiction

Patron confirmed they read Material: No, "I skimmed the entire book"

Patron request for Material: Move to the Adult section

Reason given by patron for removal or reassignment as it relates to Section B of Collection Development policy:

Patron marked they did read the Collection Development Policy but did not cite any specific part of the Material that violates the Policy.

In response to how the book meets the definition of *Material Harmful to Minors* the Patron wrote: *"This book contains sexual excitement and describes sexual conduct and sexual acts which in violation of ID Code 18-1514(6)".*

In response to how the book appeals to the prurient interests of Minors the Patron wrote: “*The book has material in violation of ID Code 18-1514(6)*”.

As provided within the Definitions section on page 6 of the Policy Prurient Interest means, “as defined by the U.S. Supreme Court, a shameful or morbid interest in nudity, sex, or excretion, and goes substantially beyond customary limits of candor in description or representation of such matters, and does not include a normal, healthy interest in sex.”

Does the reasoning take into consideration the literary work as a whole? No

Explain: Patron wrote “*The book has material in violation of ID Code 18-1514(6)*”

Material Harmful to Minors is described in Idaho Code § 18-1514(6), material that contains nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse that (1) appeals to the prurient interest of minors as judged by the average person, applying contemporary community standards; (2) depicts or describes nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sado-masochistic abuse that is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community with respect to what is suitable material for minors and includes, but is not limited to, patently offensive representations or descriptions of (i) intimate sexual acts, normal or perverted, actual, or simulated, or (ii) masturbation, excretory functions or lewd exhibition of the genitals or genital area; **and (3) when considered as a whole, and in context in which it is used, does not possess serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for minors. All three prongs of the definition must be met for material to be Material Harmful to Minors.** “Nudity,” “sexual conduct,” “sexual excitement,” and “sado-masochistic abuse” as used herein are as defined in Idaho Code § 18-1514.

Research:

MLD Circulation Statistics:

Year to Date Circulation: **2**
Previous Year to Date
Circulation: **19**
Lifetime Circulation: **46**

Reviews:

The intended audience are teens; grades 9-12, according to the publisher and several professional reviews. Let's Talk About It, has received two starred reviews from [Publisher's Weekly](#) and [Kirkus Reviews](#). [Booklist](#) and [School Library Journal](#) also reviewed the book, citing that it “is loaded with crucial information about consent, respect, consideration, and boundaries”.

Does the reason given by the patron justify action requested based on “Collection Development and Maintenance, Section B” of Collection Development Policy? No

Explain: Based on staff and Library Director review of the Material and the selection criteria set forth in the Policy, the Material meets the following criteria outlined in Section B under “Development and Maintenance” within the Collection Development Policy:

Literary or stylistic quality;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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Content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups;	<input type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Reputations, qualifications, and significance of author, producer, or publisher;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Accuracy, currency, timeliness, and validity;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Attention of critics, reviewers, awards, and public;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Physical quality and effectiveness of format and appropriateness of format to subject;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Cost, as measured against competing materials on the same subject;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities;	<input type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Availability of discounts and efficiency in vendors used for purchasing;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Suitability for intended audience;	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Availability of subscriptions and standing orders for popular materials, reference, and nonfiction items published or released annually.	<input type="checkbox"/> Material meets criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Material does not meet criteria <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

If the patron requests alternative placement of the Material, is there an option that is suitable without making the Material inaccessible to other patrons? No.

Explain: The patron requested the item be moved to the Adult section. The format of the Material is intended for the Teen collection and there is not another collection it would be suitable for in the library. As such, removing the Material would make it inaccessible to the patrons for which it is intended.

Findings:

- The Material meets a majority of the criteria outlined in “Collection Development and Maintenance, Section B” of the Collection Development Policy.
- The Material was well reviewed by industry experts.
- Circulation statistics for the Material show that the item is being used by the community.
- The Material contains content related to sex and sexuality presented in an informational format.
- The Material provides value as a sex ed text specifically written for a teen audience. The Material may also be used by health educators or guardians working with teens and includes research and additional resources at the end of the book.
- ‘Minors’ refers to all youth under 18; this material that was created for a teen audience (14+/ grades 9-12) is suitable for Minors.
- The material has not received any awards, but the authors have gained popularity through other notable works.
- This is a subject area that is traditionally lacking in up to date and relatable resources for the age group intended.

Conclusion:

After reviewing the Material as a whole, it is recommended that the Request for Reconsideration for *Let’s Talk About It* be denied. It is recommended however that the Material be relocated to Teen Graphic Non-Fiction. This item is currently shelved in Teen Non-Fiction. It is a graphic novel with information presented in a comic book format and would align more closely with the Teen Graphic Non-Fiction collection.

The Material aligns with the District’s Collection Development Policy. It has positive reviews and circulation statistics that demonstrate its relevance to the community. Additionally, the Material doesn’t meet the legal definition of “material harmful to minors” as outlined in Section A. under Reconsideration of Materials within the Collection Development Policy, which references Idaho Code § 18-1514.

A determination to remove the Material based on a portion of the contents that an individual finds disagreeable would be counter to the District’s Collection Development Policy and an affront to the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement as well as a violation of the First Amendment.

Section 2 of the form constitutes “written notice” to the District for a request to relocate the Material pursuant to the “Children’s School and Library Protection Act” (see Idaho Code § 18-1517B(3)(b)). This Memo treats the patron’s submitted Request as formal written notice under the Children’s School and Library Protection Act and the Material has been reviewed for compliance with the Act. As stated herein, review of the Material has led to the conclusion that the Material does not meet the definition of “harmful to minors” under Idaho Code § 18-1514(6).