AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF Florida )
) ss:
COUNTY OF Brevard )

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority duly authorized in the State of Florida, County of Brevard to take acknowledgments and administer oaths, personally appeared Hamilton Boone who, after being duly sworn on oath, according to law, deposes and says as follows:

1. My name is Hamilton Boone

2. I make all statements contained in this Affidavit based upon my personal knowledge.

3. I am of sound mind and body, over the age of 18, and understand the obligation of an oath.

4. [Insert statements in as many paragraphs as needed]

FURTHER THIS AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

Print Name: Natalie Willard

SWORN TO under oath and subscribed before me this 1 day of February 2017, by Hamilton Boone, who (x) is personally known to me, or ( ) has produced as identification.

(Natalie Willard)
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires 8/4/19
Commission No. FF 906248

My Commission Expires: 8/4/19
My name is Hamilton Boone and I have provided a sworn affidavit concerning the Materials Challenge Process/Policy in the Brevard County School District. The following is my testimony concerning that process/policy. I want to make it perfectly clear, that I am not trying to ban any books from any schools or any libraries. What I am trying to do, is change the flawed policy and procedure for parents challenging material in school. Parents want a meaningful and impactful role in deciding the material that their child is exposed to. The Materials Challenge Process/Policy was originally designed for parents, but as you will see, parents were left absolutely powerless and in fact blocked from participation.

Beginning in the fall of 2015, my wife, Penny and I became aware of a book that was readily available to students at our son’s high school, Satellite High School and DeLaura Middle School, which share a library. The work of fiction is entitled, "Beloved" by Toni Morrison. Her name caught my attention, because of another one of her novels entitled, THE BLUEST EYES, which the pedophiliac is presented as a loving and tender man. Today, you will find multiple copies of THE BLUEST EYES on the shelf in my son’s AP English class.

In the fall of 2015, I made an appointment, along with my wife, to speak to the principle, Mr. Elliott, and the English teacher, Mrs. Dipeppe to discuss "Beloved". The meeting was cordial. I expressed my concern that this type of fictional work was in our schools. I would not of known this type of pornographic material was available to my son and other children if I had not know of Morrison’s other work.
I then read some of the objectionable material found in this “literary" work. For example:

These excerpts are from the first 127 pages of the 324 page novel.

Page 13:
And so they were: Paul D Garner, Paul F Garner, Paul A Garner, Halle Suggs and Sixo, the wild man. All in their twenties, minus women, fucking cows, dreaming of rape, thrashing on pallets, rubbing their thighs and waiting for the new girl- the one who took Baby Sugg’s place after Halle bought her with five years of Sundays.

Page 20:
"As she raised up from the heat she felt Paul D behind her and his hands under her breasts...Behind her, bending down, his body an arc of kindness, he held her breasts in the palm of his hands...And when the top of her dress was around her hips..."

Page 24:
"A stair step before him, was Baby Suggs replacement, the new girl they dreamed of at night and fucked cows for at dawn while waiting for her to choose"

Page 25:
"Seth lay on her back, her head turned from him. Out of the corner of his eye, Paul D saw the float of her breast and disliked it, the spread away, flat roundness of them that he could definitely live without, never mind that downstairs he had held them as though they were the most expensive part of himself."
"Seth smiled at her and Halle' s stupidity. Even the cows new and came to look. Uncrossing her ankles, she managed not to laugh aloud."

"The jump, thought Paul D, from a calf to a girl wasn' t all that mighty... And taking her in the corn rather than her quarters, a yard away from the cabins of the others who had lost out, was a gesture of tenderness. Halle wanted privacy for her and got public display. Who could miss a ripple in a cornfield on a quite cloudless day?... It was hard, hard, hard sitting there erect as dogs watching the cornstalks dance at noon."

"Breakfast? Want some breakfast, nigger?"
"Yes, sir."
"Hungry, nigger?"
"Yes, sir."
"Here you go."

Occasionally a kneeling man chose a gunshot in his head as the price, maybe, of taking a bit of foreskin with him to Jesus. He was looking at his palsied hands, smelling the guard, listening to his soft grunts so like doves', as he stood before the man kneeling in his midst .

Mrs. Dioppe then explained her thinking in choosing "Beloved"; "Beloved is offered as a model for students to understand why they (Black Americans), feel the way they do today."

How a work of fiction, set over 150 years ago in pre-Civil War, graphically depicting black on black crimes, bestiality, sodomy, incest, rape, infanticide, murder and pedophilia, is pertinent to understanding how "they" feel today, is beyond my comprehension. This sounded like a personal Agenda instead.

Florida Today/USA Today policy says, "...reserves the right to suspend users and/or remove comments that..., (contain) Obscenities, vulgarities or any variation of such that suggests, connotes or contains indecent, offensive or lewd speech."

My wife and I were told the book would remain. Mr. Elliott encouraged us to the drop the issue, but we said we could not agree and asked what other steps we may take. Mr. Elliott said that after filling out the necessary forms we could present our thoughts to a "impartial" committee. We reviewed the process and found there are 2 committees; the 1st with 6 members and the 2nd with 13 members. If we decided to appeal, we would next meet with the "impartial" committee of 13. We discovered that all of the "impartial" committee members, worked under Mr. Elliott, had previous ties to Mr. Elliott or SHS, was a student of Mrs. Dioppe, or a member of the Brevard County School District administration. Not too "impartial from our view."
I asked Mr. Elliott, as he had done so many times before, to do a school wide call or email to all parents associated with SHS or to inform them of this issue. An issue that was to be in the Sunshine. Mr. Elliott refused, without any reason for doing so.

In a couple of weeks, Mrs. Dipeppe and myself gave our individual views to the committee of 6 concerning "Beloved". As expected, the vote was 6-0 against us. The next committee meeting was a real eye-opener for me. Although all school businesses to be conducted in the Sunshine, including both committee meetings, the exact opposite happened.

Before the 2nd committee meeting, we discovered that a member of the committee had met privately with Mrs. Dipeppe to "better understand her thoughts". Additionally, SHS teachers had met with each other concerning "Beloved". This was done without our knowledge or presence. Although I asked to meet with the committee member whom had met with Mrs. Dipeppe, and that was denied. Once again, the "impartial" committee members, either worked under Mr. Elliott, had previous ties to Mr. Elliott or SHS, was a student of Mrs. Dipeppe, or a member of the Brevard County School District administration. Additionally, my wife started to record the meeting with our camera so that an accurate transcription could be made. In no uncertain terms, a member of the district administration, Mrs. VanMeter, ordered her not to record. I came in shortly after, not knowing this, and proceeded to record on my phone. Mrs. VanMeter also ordered me to quit recording. I reminded her that this was a public meeting and that is to be done in the sunshine. She refused to relent in ordering us not to record. Penny and I were concerned that security would be called so we acquiesced to her order. As predicted we lost 13-0.

I have heard stories of parents not liking the age-inappropriate material being taught, but afraid to speak out due to persecution or ostracizing of the children.

I spoke to my school board representative, Amy Kneessy and explained that the Materials Challenge Process is totally flawed and anti-parent. In the Materials Challenge Process, parents are not allowed to provide meaningful and impactful input. The opposite is true! Parents are blocked from doing so, with the outcome decided completely by the School District.

Amy met with myself and Tina Descovich. Tina was running for Amy's termed out seat, and now is the new school board representative for my district. I brought 28 suggestions of how to make the Materials Challenge Process, the parent centered process it was originally meant to be. Amy presented these suggestions to the Superintendent, Mr. Desmond Blackburn.

The very next week, I arrange a meeting with Mr Blackburn. My wife and I met with him at his district office. I was excited to meet Mr. Blackburn because in his interviews, and in his slide presentations, he professed the importance of parents being involved in their children's education. His actions have not match his rhetoric.
As soon as Penny and I sat down, he asked if we intended to ban books and I answered absolutely not. We wanted parents genuinely involved in this process and our recent experience is that we were blocked from doing so. He told Penny and I that he had handpicked a group to go over the revision of the Materials Challenge Process/Policy. He seemed rushed and we were led out.

The next day I emailed him and thanked him for meeting with us. I added that since Penny and I are the only parents to go through this process, that either one of us would like to volunteer to help. Either one of us would be an excellent resource, especially considering we were the only parents to go through this.

For the next 2 months, I sent multiple emails and left multiple phone messages at his office, asking about being part of the “Blackburn hand-picked group”. Literally, on the 60th day, he finally came to the phone and I asked him to be part of this group, and without explanation, emphatically answered NO!

Later, I came to discover that the “Blackburn handpicked group” was Blackburn and 2 immediate staff members. No Parents!

There was fraud and obfuscation by Mr. Blackburn and his hand picked group, from sending out a sham survey, to formulating questions to get the answers he wanted, to ignoring questions that didn't give him the answers he wanted, to email addresses being changed so parents wouldn't receive the sham survey(me, Penny, Tina, and many, many friends).

In actuality, nothing was changed in the process whatsoever. The many suggestions that were brought forward by Amy, Tina and myself to have parents more involved, were all ignored.

Through Mr. Blackburn's actions, I have determined that he is an elitist and has a liberal agenda where parents do not play a primary role in their child's education. His focus is to immerse our kids in materials that are age-inappropriate, in direct opposition to the parent's values, while overruling parents wishes in these and other matters.
By Mr. Blackburn’s efforts, he has continually demonstrated that he is Anti-Parent and an Authoritarian. He has demonstrated a zest for implementing an agenda that is in direct opposition to parent’s values. His condescending attitude towards parents and seemingly knowing what is best for my child and other parent’s children, is at best dangerous. In my dealings with Mr. Blackburn, I have found him to be self-absorbed, out of touch and unresponsive. I now understand why there were walkouts in South Florida.

Please help make the Materials Challenge Process a pro parent, pro child tool for parents to be deeply involved in the education of their children.

Thank You,

C. Hamilton Boone
Parent