



April 17, 2025

Dear

This letter is in response to the completed Request for Reconsideration form for “The Family Book” by Todd Parr in the Cromaine District Library (CDL) collection. The concern about this title noted on the form was “sexualization/exploitation of children.”

When we met you explained to me that your main goal is to protect children from the subject matter of these particular books, which you broadly defined as containing viewpoints that, in your opinion, “will lead children to confusion about gender.” I explained to you that per library policy, only a parent may restrict what their own children read, and that public bodies may not restrict access to books based on the book’s viewpoint. You indicated that your personal views about gender confusion should take precedence over the rights of other parents in the community with whom you disagree.

After completing a staff review, I have concluded that this title was acquired in accordance with the library’s Materials Selection Policy #3010, which was provided when we discussed your concern in March 2025. This title was first available to community members in November 2010 and has circulated 66 times. It is published by Little, Brown, & Co. It is shelved in the youth picture book section because it is a picture book written for children ages 4-8.

School Library Journal, a professional review source used by librarians when selecting titles, reviewed the title on December 2003. The review reads:

As he did in The Mommy Book and The Daddy Book (both Little, Brown, 2002), Parr introduces children to an array of families. Whimsical illustrations featuring neon colors and figures outlined in black show big ones and small ones, and families that look alike and relatives who look just like their pets. The art features both human and animal figures; thus, pigs depict both a family that likes to be clean, and one that likes to be messy. Some families include stepmoms, stepdads, stepsisters, or stepbrothers; some adopt children. Other families have two moms or two dads, while some children have only one parent. Interspersed with the differences among families are the ways they are alike: all like to hug each other, are sad when they lose someone they love, enjoy celebrating special days together, and can help each other to be strong. This concept book celebrating the diversity of family groups is distinguished by its sense of fun. PreS-Gr 2.

Additionally, Kirkus Reviews, a professional review source used by librarians when selecting titles, reviewed the title on November 2003. The review reads:

An all-inclusive look at a diverse array of families, The Family Book is the latest by Todd Parr. The book's simple statements of tolerance and love are accompanied by Parr's equally simple, bright-hued illustrations bordered by a thick black line. Parr runs the gamut of potential familial situations, from families that live far apart to those with "two moms or two dads," conveying the message that no matter what little differences makes each unique, a family's love for each other is what really matters.

CDL's Policy #3010, Section V part B. notes that *"Responsibility for the reading material of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The Library respects each individual parent's right to supervise his/her children's choice of reading materials. However, the Library does not have the right to act in loco parentis (in place of the parent). Therefore, a parent who chooses to restrict the materials his/her children select must accompany those children when they use the collection to impose those restrictions.*

C. The Library Director is responsible for overseeing where the books are shelved and catalogued. However, the Library Board recommends that any materials that are appropriate for adults or older teens but may be considered harmful to minors, as defined by the Library Privacy Act, are shelved within the adult collection.

Review has deemed this content does not fit the definition of "harmful to minors" in [MCL722.674 sec.4](#). Therefore, "The Family Book" will be retained in the youth picture book section of the library.

Policy #3010 provides a protocol to appeal of this decision in Section IX Part F: written appeal of the Library Director's decision may be made by the Requester to the Chair of the Library Board within ten (10) business days after the written decision is made by the Library Director. The appeal must include the specific Library Material being appealed and the reason that the Requester would like the decision reversed. Please direct an appeal to:

William Bolin
President, Cromaine District Library Board of Trustees
PO Box 308
3688 N. Hartland Rd.
Hartland, MI 48353

The Library Board will review any documentation it deems necessary to decide within sixty (60) days of receipt of the appeal. The Library Board may issue an additional extension if necessary in order to fully evaluate the material.

CDL's Board of Trustees delegates collection development responsibilities to the library director. A staff of librarians with advanced degrees and professional credentials make collection development decisions for CDL. Ultimately, however, the responsibility of what a child reads rests with parents and guardians. Public libraries cannot be expected to interfere with parental obligations and responsibilities when it comes to deciding what a minor may read, listen to, or view. It is the right of parent/guardian to determine what materials are available for their children to read.

The Cromaine District Library serves 30,000 people in Hartland Township and portions of Brighton, Deerfield, Genoa, Oceola and Tyrone Townships. Library patrons come from a wide variety of religious, political, ethnic, and social backgrounds. Members of our community are well educated and possess a broad range of interests. Not every item the library offers will be enjoyed by every reader, listener, or viewer, but there is something for everyone at the public library. I respect your personal taste in materials and encourage you to ask CDL librarians to recommend titles that more closely match your interests.

Best,

Sarah Neidert
Director, Cromaine District Library

