

Request for Reconsideration

The Library Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of collection materials and programming to the Library Director and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
Phone _____

Do you represent yourself? Y or an Organization? (please specify) : _____

1. Type of resource on which you are commenting: All format
- Book (e-book) Audio Recording DVD Game
 Magazine/Newspaper Content of Library Program
 Other, please specify: _____

Title Flamer

Author/Producer/Presenter Curato

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
Parental Concern

3. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?
Detailed Summary - actually read Most

4. What concerns you about the resource?
Sexualization/exploitation of children

5. What action are you requesting from the Library

Removal

Process: As outlined in the Library's Materials Selection Policy #3020: No material shall be removed from the Library's collection until all steps in the following process have been completed.

- A. Patrons ("Requester") who object to Library Materials will be sent to the Director.
- B. The Director will discuss the Library Materials in question with the Requester, attempting to resolve the concern to both the Requester's and Library's satisfaction.
- C. If the Requester wishes to carry the request further, the Director will provide the Requester with a copy of the Materials Selection Policy, including the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials ("Request for Reconsideration").
- D. Once a completed, signed copy of the Request for Reconsideration is received, the Library Director shall decide the Request for Reconsideration, taking into consideration the Library's Materials Selection Policy and any other relevant information to reach a decision. The Director may consult with any other staff or consultants when making this decision.
- E. The Library Director shall send the decision in writing to the complainant within seventy-five (75) days of the receipt of the completed Request for Reconsideration form. If the decision is that the questioned material should be removed from the collection, the Requester will be notified in writing by the Library Director and all copies of the item will be withdrawn. If the decision is that the questioned material is to be retained, the Requester will be notified in writing by the Library Director that the material will be retained.
- F. A 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 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.
- G. The Library Board serves as the final authority in cases involving retention or withdrawal of Library Materials.



Date April 14, 2025

Dear

This letter is in response to the completed Request for Reconsideration form for “FLAMER” by Mike Curato 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 January 2021 and has circulated 15 times. It is published by Henry Holt and Co (a Trademark of MacMillan Publishing). It is shelved in the teen graphic novel section, as it is a graphic novel written for patrons ages 12-18.

REVIEWS:

Kirkus Reviews (kirkusreviews.com), a professional review source used by librarians when selecting titles, reviewed the title on June 14, 2020:

The last week at Scouting camp highlights accomplishments and humiliations that last a lifetime.

Aiden, a fat, biracial (Filipino and White), soon-to-be high schooler, is in his last week of Boy Scout camp in 1995. Each day documents events, from bonding over fireside songs and learning important skills to the micro- and macroaggressions that follow an adolescent boy of color who presents as effeminate and is queer. As the week moves on, readers learn more about Aiden and his life, from his stressful home with an emotionally abusive father to his love of Catholicism and being an altar server. The stress of a new school, bullies who are ever present, and struggles with identity drive Aiden to a breaking point, one that’s familiar to many young people. The monochromatic illustrations, sometimes highlighted with red, orange, and yellow, are timeless moments of a remembered childhood. The use of red to highlight the tangible (firelight, a Swiss Army knife) and represent the intangible (passion, sorrow, and hope) is a master class in simplicity. But the true star of this book is the writing, which describes a boy who could live in any decade on his journey of self-discovery. This is a story that will be read and reread, and for some, it will be the defining book of their adolescence.

Buy it. Read it. Share it. (afterword, resources) (Graphic fiction. 12-18)

School Library Journal (slj.com), a professional review source used by librarians when selecting titles, reviewed the title on August 28, 2020:

Gr 8 Up—As Boy Scout camp draws to a close and high school looms, 14-year-old Aiden Navarro, who is biracial (white and Filipino), is on high alert. Feeling self-conscious about his weight, dealing with racism from other campers, and wondering about his sexuality, he often takes preemptive action to appear unimpeachably heterosexual and unconvincingly attempts to imitate the homophobic, macho behavior of other campers—though his thoughtfulness usually wins out. Aiden’s precarious balancing of identities pushed upon him and those he tries to hide starts to crumble when he begins to fantasize romantically about his tentmate Elias, a steadfast summer friend who has been unfazed by other campers’ gossip about Aiden being gay. As Aiden heads into the last days of camp, his desire, self-loathing, and uncertainty come to a boiling point. Curato’s incredible art conveys Aiden’s point of view, his thoughts, and his reimaginings of his physical form with compelling beauty and empathy. The drawing style feels specific to a teen’s world, spare yet filled with distinct characters and an idyllic camp setting. Most images are in shades of black and gray, which makes the appearance of fire in Aiden’s dreams and fantasies—in hues of red, yellow, and orange, signifying his passion, rage, desire, and shame—even more poignant as more light is shed on his true self.

VERDICT Curato has created a beautiful story of a teen who must decide if he will force himself into the mold of what he thinks a “normal” boy is, or if he can allow himself to live life on his own terms. An essential book that shows readers that they are never alone in their struggles.

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, “FLAMER” will be retained in the teen graphic novel section of the library, labeled with “This book may contain sexually explicit material- Cromaine District 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

