

Standing Committee Against Censorship

Charge:

- To solicit and receive reports of censorship (<http://www2.ncte.org/resources/ncte-intellectual-freedom-center/>) incidents from NCTE members, constituent groups, and sources outside the Council;
- to serve as a resource on current patterns of censorship; to continue to raise awareness of censorship issues;
- to serve as an advisory committee to NCTE Headquarters considering the kinds of support and services that an Intellectual Freedom/Anti-Censorship Center could provide;
- to promote policies for literature adoption that allay the possibility of censorship;
- to help NCTE develop rationales for the teaching of controversial texts, and
- to develop a white paper that further explores students' right to write and all of its implications.

Major activities: What major actions, projects, initiatives, or studies in your charge have been completed by your group since July 1, 2017? In each activity describe the more important features of the work, and connect your work to the NCTE Vision Statement, if applicable.

1. What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are “in progress” at this time?

NCTE's vision calls for collaboration and community in an effort to support teachers and students in classrooms. The current members of the Standing Committee Against Censorship (SCAC) have collectively vowed to continue this support through both a summer project, presentations at the annual convention in Houston, and collaboration with other NCTE committees.

Our first project aimed to fill the gap in our current rationale list that NCTE members draw on when faced with a challenge of censorship in their classrooms. In addition to each member completing two rationales, several members have built the crafting of rationales into their current graduate English education courses, thus helping us add to this valuable resource. It is the goal of this project for educators to draw on these rationales as a means of supporting their commitment to student access of diverse literature.

In addition to this project, we have been diligently working on the two presentations that will be sponsored by our committee at the annual convention in Houston. We have collaborated on creating resources to distribute and have secured several young adult authors as panelists for a discussion on the disproportionality of challenges to YA literature by authors of color and LGBTQ authors. This endeavor supports NCTE's vision of assisting teachers in providing access for more diverse voices in their curriculum.

Two of our current members, Brooke Eisenbach and myself, have been collaborating with NCTE's LGBT Advisory Board Committee. Together, with two of their members, we have submitted a proposal for a themed journal of the *English Journal*. If accepted, it is the intention of the SCAC to contribute to this issue with a collectively written article on censorship, thus adding to the research in our field.

Lastly, we have gathered and submitted our research findings on age appropriateness to a shared Goggle folder. It is our aim to use these findings to support a potential position statement.

2. What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?

During our annual meeting at the NCTE convention in Houston, all rationales will be submitted to the chair. The chair will review each submission and pass them along to NCTE to be uploaded onto the rationale resource list located on NCTE's webpage.

We have met several times since the last annual meeting and have scheduled one more meeting

before the annual convention to finalize our presentations and share our progress on the rationales. During this meeting a call to begin to consider our next project and session topics for the 2019 conference will be discussed.

This past year, each member has contributed research findings on age appropriateness to a shared Google folder. During our annual meeting in Houston, we will review these findings and continue our conversation on using our findings for a position statement on this topic.

3. How has the work of your group contributed to NCTE's role in shaping the profession of teaching and/or the understanding of literacy in educational contexts?

The SCAC assists any and all NCTE members in the event that they find themselves facing a challenge of censorship in the classroom. Given the increasing number of recent challenges surrounding texts that explore race, gender and sexuality, our support is not only needed, but it is imperative in upholding the vision of NCTE. As a resource in this capacity, we are helping shape the profession of teaching and the understanding of literacy in educational contexts. In teachers' efforts to support student's literacy development and access to diverse texts, our committee continues to provide resources (rationales, position statements, etc.) that offer guidelines and frameworks that help educators advocate for students' rights to read and write.

Paula Greathouse, Chair