

ACLU of Utah investigating after books removed from schools

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<https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-arts-and-entertainment-education-utah-salt-lake-city-e5d340beb7f3df8ff5812c34390a6dad>

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The American Civil Liberties Union of Utah is investigating complaints related to the removal of several books from high school library shelves in a suburban Salt Lake City district after a parent complaint.

The Canyons School District appears to have disregarded its own policy for responding to such complaints by pulling nine books off the shelves, including “The Bluest Eye” by Toni Morrison, before completing a full review, the organization said in a statement.

“Constitutional protections cannot be simply ignored,” the ACLU of Utah said a statement.

The removals came after a parent of younger students in the district emailed about what she called sexually explicit material in several titles that she learned about from social media, [KSL.com reported](#). She told the outlet she had asked for them to be reviewed for content, not necessarily pulled.

The Canyons policy states that books should remain in use until a full review of any challenged material is complete. In this case, nine books were removed from shelves in four high schools while a review was still in process.

District spokesman Jeff Haney has said the district decided to pull the books off the shelves of the school libraries while district officials review the policy itself, which also states that challenges to library materials cannot come from outside a school community. He framed the district’s action as a “review for content” in a statement to KSL.com

Another book in question was “The Opposite of Innocent” by Sonya Sones. [She told KSL.com](#) she was “saddened and disturbed” to learn her book was removed, especially since it was intended to prevent sexual abuse and she has heard from several readers helped by it. The book is about a 14-year-old girl who thinks she is in love with an older man, but later realizes she is being sexually abused.

The other titles in question are “Beyond Magenta” by Susan Kuklin, “Monday’s Not Coming” by Tiffany Jackson, “Out of Darkness” by Ashley Hope Perez, “Lawn Boy” by Jonathan Evison, “Lolita” by Vladimir Nabokov, “Gender Queer” by Maia Kobabe and “L8R G8R” by Lauren Myracle.

The ACLU pointed to a previous case in 2021 where it sued a school district after administrators removed “In Our Mothers’ House,” a children’s book about same-sex parents, from an elementary school library. The Davis School District settled three months later, agreeing to return the book to shelves and never remove another book based solely on LGBTQ content.

Republican Gov. Spencer Cox called last week for caution, saying “students of history” should be wary about banning b