



## American Booksellers for Free Expression (ABFE) Free Speech Work FY 2021 (October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021)

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*ABFE's below FY 2021 work is based on ABA's 2021 Ends Policies<sup>1</sup>. ABFE's FY 2022 work will be in line with ABA's [updated Ends Policies](#).<sup>2</sup>*

- ABFE wrote, as part of the Kids' Right to Read Project, the Governing Board of the Vail School District in Vail, Arizona, commending the district for convening a diverse committee of educators and stakeholders to review Slaughterhouse Five, rather than summarily removing the book due to pressure from a parent.
- With the Kids' Right to Read Project, ABFE wrote the Board of Education Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District in Kingsburg, California, urging them to return Ghost Boys to the curriculum after protest led to removal.
- ABFE is currently communicating with state lawmakers in Missouri regarding a letter ABFE received from an incarcerated person seeking to write and publish a book. The incarcerated person stated in his letter that prison officials told him he is not allowed to write a book while in prison. Through communications with legislative committees and the Missouri Department of Corrections, ABFE received the policy in question which forbids incarcerated people from entering into a contract.
- ABFE participated in the Banned Books Week Coalition to create the 2021 Banned Books Week theme: Books Unite Us, Censorship Divides Us with Jason Reynolds as the inaugural chair for Banned Books Week September 26 – October 2, 2021. ABFE also created deals and materials for stores and distributed over 500 Banned Book Week kits to bookstores.
- ABFE met with representatives of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China to discuss the plight of Hong Kong bookseller Gui Minhai as well as other political prisoners in China. As a next step ABFE is, at The Commission's request, reaching out to Mr. Gui's daughter and the Swedish embassy.
- As part of the Kids' Right to Read Project, ABFE wrote Clark County (Nevada) School District regarding its peremptory removal of the graphic novel Fun Home from the reading list of a tenth grade English Honors class at Palo Verde High School. The District has apparently violated its own regulations by removing the book without following the mandated procedures for the review of challenged instructional material.

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<sup>1</sup> "4. Legal and regulatory policies reflect the interests of independent bookstores in such areas as antitrust action, small business assistance, and the First Amendment right to disseminate information as it relates to the bookselling industry."

<sup>2</sup> "1(a). Core members have the resources in support of their right to freedom of expression."