



December 17, 2021

Matt Krause, Chairman
Texas House Committee on General Investigating
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78748-2910

Via email: Darren.Keyes_HC@house.texas.gov

Re: Response to School District Content Inquiry

Representative Matt Krause,

The Denton Independent School District (the “District”) is in receipt of your letter dated October 25, 2021. Although your inquiry does not seem to have the legal authority of the full Texas House Committee on General Investigating, I am providing this response on behalf of the District as we value transparency and open communication in Denton ISD.

For reference, Denton Independent School District has been committed to providing a quality education since it was founded in 1882. The District – located about 25 miles north of Dallas and Fort Worth – encompasses 186 square miles and contains all or parts of 18 cities, communities or major developments. The District originated in the city of Denton, the county seat for Denton County, and has a rich history. In 1882, voters passed a \$15,000 bond election to finance the construction of Denton's first public school. The structure was three stories and made of red brick. The district has continued to grow and is currently one of fastest-growing school districts in North Texas.

Denton ISD includes four comprehensive high schools, eight middle schools, 24 elementary schools, two early childhood centers, a K8 Virtual Academy, an alternative high school, an advanced technology complex and other specialized schools and centers. Denton ISD currently serves approximately 32,000 students with over 70,000 parents and guardians.

From speaking with colleagues, my understanding is that you seek only to understand if library book content is an actual concern among parents and students. As mentioned above, Denton ISD is one of the fastest growing school districts in North Texas. Despite the growth and large number of students and parents, over the past two years Denton ISD has only received one book challenge. The District maintains approximately 672,500 books and eResources across our campuses. Clearly, with a challenge rate of approximately .00003 per student, or, .000001 when compared to the number of resources available to our students, the content in the Denton ISD libraries is overwhelmingly appropriate by an objective measure and positively received by our parents, students, staff and constituents. In addition, the District continues to refine and improve policies and procedures, to ensure that our high standards for curriculum and content are met throughout our fast growing school district. We continue to review and revise our library collections and collection processes, while balancing the free speech rights of students as directed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

Currently, the District is focused on learning loss recovery from the shut-down ordered by Governor Abbott in March 2020. Collectively, many students across the state have lost the equivalent of a year of quality education. We are committed to alleviating this learning loss and preparing our students for College, Career, and Military Readiness upon graduation. This is the singular focus in Denton ISD. In the meantime, we will continue to work with parents, librarians, students, and other staff members to ensure that our library collections continue to meet the needs of our students and support a culture of learning and reading while maintaining age-appropriate content for our learners.

I trust this provides you some clarity. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Deron Robinson
General Counsel

Cc: Dr. Jamie Wilson, Superintendent