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ENGEL & MARTIN ISSUES STATEMENT ON REMOVAL OF TITLES FROM STUDENT BOOK FAIRS

EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE ACCESS TO BOOKS DEALING WITH RACE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY IRRESPONSIBLY LIMIT THE FREE SPEECH RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

Engel & Martin, LLC, a leading law firm defending the constitutional rights of students, is concerned about the increasing number of book bans in school districts around the United States. Recently, [according to news reports](#), a school district in Southwest Ohio decided to pause all future book fairs during school hours as a result of complaints about titles dealing with LGBTQ issues. Subsequently, Scholastic, the children's book publisher, [said that its elementary-school book fairs would segregate titles](#) that deal with race, gender and sexuality.

Engel & Martin Scholastic opposes state and local laws that effectively ban books in schools. These laws, by requiring schools to remove books that contain potentially offensive content, are overbroad and have led to mass removals of books.

Engel & Martin supports broad First Amendment rights of students. Managing Partner Joshua Engel said, "Laws and other efforts to remove

books from schools is censorship – students have the right to be exposed to new ideas and the freedom to choose what they want to read.”

The segregated titles from book fairs by Scholastic illustrates that this is not an issue about assuring that students do not have access to age-inappropriate titles. Many of the titles included in the special collection by Scholastic, [according to the New York Times](#), include books about Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson; Ruby Bridges, and John Lewis. “The message here is clear,” Engel said, “the purpose behind segregating these titles is to chill and silence diverse voices.”

Engel & Martin calls on Scholastic and other publishers to stand up for free and equal access of students to books. “These companies have a choice” Engel said, “They can be complicit and facilitate efforts to silence diverse voices, or they can stand up for students against the enemies of free speech.”

ABOUT ENGEL & MARTIN: [Engel & Martin, LLC](#) is a boutique law firm that defends student throughout the country. The attorneys of Engel & Martin, LLC have argued some of the most important recent due process cases involving student rights and have handled hundreds of school discipline cases across the country.

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