

Committee Member's Vote	Reason for Vote	Other Comments
Remove	<p>Verdict: This book should not be retained in Howard County School Libraries or as part of a school curriculum due to its sexually explicit content. The book describes a ten-year-old boy being molested. The book does not portray this as a bad thing. The kid was puzzled by the fact that the molester avoided him after that. Years later, the boy tries to confront the molester but the molester pretends it never happened. What does this book teach?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It teaches that molesting a ten-year-old is okay, the kid will probably like it</li> <li>2. It teaches that if you are molested, there is no reason to tell anyone about it</li> <li>3. It teaches that the molester will not face any negative consequences</li> <li>4. It teaches that if you molest someone, you can just deny it</li> </ol> <p>The author himself states that the book "was intended for an adult audience" and that "there is graphic language in this scene, which depicts sexual acts."  <a href="https://nwbooklovers.org/2021/09/28/the-would-be-banning-of-lawn-boy-and-why-im-not-booking-any-flights-to-texas-in-the-near-future/">https://nwbooklovers.org/2021/09/28/the-would-be-banning-of-lawn-boy-and-why-im-not-booking-any-flights-to-texas-in-the-near-future/</a></p> <p>Any book in a high school library is readily accessible to a 14-year-old. A 14-year-old is not an adult and should not be given access to adult material in a school library. HCPSS policy provides guidance about what is and isn't age appropriate.</p> <p>HCPSS Policy 8040  Videos rated R, NC-17, or non-rated feature videos produced after 1990, may not be shown to classes in HCPSS  <a href="https://policy.hcpss.org/8000/8040/">https://policy.hcpss.org/8000/8040/</a></p> <p>What does it take for a movie to receive an R rating?  A motion picture's single use of one of the harsher sexually-derived words, though only as an expletive, initially requires at least a PG-13 rating. More than one such expletive requires an R rating, as must even one of those words used in a sexual context.  <a href="https://www.showbizjunkies.com/mpaa-ratings/">https://www.showbizjunkies.com/mpaa-ratings/</a></p> <p>[language warning]</p> <p>There is zero doubt that this book would receive at least an R rating, since it uses the word "fuck" over 70 times, in addition to the sexually explicit content. This means, under HCPSS policy, it is not age appropriate. HCPSS students and parents do not expect R-rated books in school libraries.</p> <p>Other vocabulary in the book: "puto" "pinche" "gay" as an insult, "fag" "homo" "retarded" a joke making fun of gay people, "shit" "bullshit" "Goddamn" "cunt" etc, etc. It seems like most pages in this book contain R-rated language, often multiple times. HCPSS policy requires civility and respect in oral and written communication. Pervasive use of offensive language is not appropriate in school library books.</p> <p>Other issues:  Negative behaviors include drunk driving after getting a sober person to breathe into the Breathalyzer</p> <p>The white author of this book has been criticized for the book's negative racial stereotypes  Mexican and Chicano "lawn boys" taking care of people's yards</p> <p>The only black character is a man who sits around in his underwear watching porn and smoking marijuana.</p> <p>HCPSS Policy 1020  Students, employees, and third parties share responsibility for maintaining a school and work environment free from sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct. Employees, students, and third parties may be subject to disciplinary action or consequences for inappropriate behavior including that of a sexual nature, even when the behavior does not rise to the level of sexual discrimination as defined by prevailing federal and state law.</p> <p>Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to:  ... Sharing or pressuring someone to share (including electronically) sexually explicit material.  <a href="https://policy.hcpss.org/1000/1020/">https://policy.hcpss.org/1000/1020/</a></p> <p>The author openly admits that this book is intended for adults and contains graphic language, depicting sexual acts, and therefore is not in keeping with HCPSS policy prohibiting the sharing of sexually explicit material.</p> <p>The responsibility of the materials review committee is to look at the book itself, not just the topic or the evaluations done by other groups or organizations. They are responsible for their own reviews and we are responsible for ours. There are clearly parents in our community who oppose having this book in school libraries. On the other hand, this book has received praise and awards. Our job is not to join either bandwagon but to evaluate the book based on its actual content in light of HCPSS policy and the spirit of that policy. The fact that a student is interested in the topic of the book, Lawn Boy, does not mean that they are no longer considered a minor or that they no longer should be protected from sexual harassment and sexually explicit, age-inappropriate books and materials in accordance with HCPSS policy and applicable laws. Our students deserve to be equally valued, respected, and protected.</p>	<p>I pasted a lot of comments in the section above. The last words are "our students deserve to be equally valued, respected and protected" If not all that was saved, please email me and I can send a copy through email</p> <p>The claim that this book includes pedophilia on pg 91-92 is untrue. The passage is about two boys both in 4th grade, not a grown man.</p> <p>Students need opportunities to inquire, study, evaluate, and gain new understanding. School libraries play a key role in allowing students to access information. This book should remain on our HCPSS HS library shelves.</p> <p>Because this is held in a library, I would assume the reader would flip through a few pages before checking it out, so if they don't think it is fit for them, they have the choice to not get it.</p> <p>The language used in discussions of sex and gender is very realistic. The author uses words that the characters actually would have used in a real-life setting. A high school reader, however, is able to discern that this is for character development and that the author is not proposing that the reader should adopt such language.</p> <p>Language is full of "F" "S" words, not feeling comfortable while reading these words as a non-native English speaker. Author may be using real words in a real life, and these words may seem to be common, but still wish students could be polite and well-educated in using words/speech.</p>
Retain	It is an excellent coming of age story that represents various viewpoints and characters.	
Retain	This story shares the experiences of the main character and his journey in overcoming adversity. Mike Munoz shares the truth about his life from his family dynamics to his many jobs. He wants desperately to change his life for the better. Some students will appreciate Mike's journey and the challenges he faces.	
Retain	The language that is being used is realistic and I hear many high schoolers use them on a daily basis. Also, it gives a perspective to people who live differently from the main character, which helps people be more inclusive.	
Retain	There is no pedophilia in this book. There are references to two fourth grade boys having oral sex. The book does not go into graphic detail about this experience. It is the equivalent of two curious kids "playing doctor." The book is not centered around this experience. In fact the novel is as self described - "The Great American Landscape Novel." A boy overcomes many obstacles to learn more about himself and how to be happy in this world. These are lessons that many readers would find valuable.	
Retain	Content sparks valuable insights. A real portrait of the character's trying to find way out.	
Retain	This book offers an insight about the American Dream that is not often heard in literature and is much needed. Many students may be able to relate to his struggles and his journey to accomplish the American Dream. It also offers a narrative in which one explores one's identity. This book also encourages others to find their identity, a journey that students need to know is okay to take.	N/A