

Matthew Lorz

From: Audit & Fraud
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 3:03 PM
To: 'Brooke Stephens'
Subject: RE: Davis School District continues to provide pornographic literature to children

Brooke,

Thank you for contacting the Internal Audit Department (IAD) of the Utah State Board of Education (USBE), which maintains the Public Education Hotline. Your concerns have been assigned reference number H-4832.

When the Internal Audit Department (AD) receives concerns, the IAD conducts a “high-level screening” under [R277-123](#) to consider the individual or entity best situated to review them and take necessary action. Because education is governed at the federal, state, and local level, the IAD then makes appropriate referrals or provides potential resources depending on the nature of the concerns and authority or jurisdiction of those involved.

Given the nature of the concerns, the IAD is referring your concerns and providing additional information as indicated below.

1. [Library Media](#)—We have referred this to the Library Media section of the USBE. This section can provide additional information and technical assistance related to your concerns, and they can also walk you through the complaint process specific to sensitive materials. This section also reports annually to the Utah Legislative [Education Interim Committee](#) in accordance with Utah Code 53G-10-103(8). For additional information and resources, use the link above (click on sensitive materials for information specific to your concerns).

Although we are making this referral, please note that it is more for situational awareness given local school districts have primary authority to address your concerns, as discussed below. The USBE’s authority to review complaints and appeals is limited under Utah Code [53G-10-103](#) and [R277-123-10](#). You can direct specific questions to the Library/Media Specialist, Davina Sauthoff, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

2. Davis School District Board—We appreciate that you have reached out to local administration (see [Where Should I Start Outline](#)). A Local Education Agency (LEA) board, such as the Davis School District board, is tasked with governance of the LEA and is responsible for “control and management” (see [53G-4-402\(17\)\(a\)](#)). There is, of course, the Utah State Board of Education, however, it’s governance of public education is of the public education system as a whole and is not necessarily hierarchical, meaning “[t]he state board may not govern, manage, or operate school districts, institutions, and programs, unless granted that authority by statute” (see Utah Code 53E-3-401(3)).

Local control and management include ensuring compliance with all federal and state laws and policies, including those related to sensitive materials. The legislature has given local LEA’s the primary authority for reviewing concerns about sensitive materials. Likewise, Utah code authorizes local boards to hear appeals on decisions related to remove of sensitive materials, and the local board must “vote in a public board meeting to decide the outcome of a sensitive material review appeal” and must include “the board’s rationale for the decision and the board’s determination on each component of the statutory and any additional policy standards the board uses to reach the board’s conclusions” (see [53G-10-103\(5\)](#)).

Unless a book title meets the requirements to be removed statewide, book removal decisions are made at the local level and USBE’s review is generally limited to whether the LEA followed its policies. For a list of titles to be removed from Utah public schools, see the Library Media resource above.

Because Davis School District has authority and jurisdiction to immediately address your concerns and take additional actions that the USBE cannot, we appreciate that you have reached out to the Davis

School Board and district personnel directly. The IAD has also sent this directly to local board leadership. We encourage you to continue working directly with the local board to voice your concerns.

As a reminder, you can find contact information for all Davis School Board members at: <https://www.davis.k12.ut.us/o/dsd/page/school-board>. You also mention concerns about Tooele School District. If you would like to contact the Tooele school board directly, you can find contact information at: <https://www.tooeleschools.org/board-of-education>.

Potential Educational and Advocacy Resources

1. Office of the Legislative Auditor General (OLAG)—The OLAG is completing a second audit of Sensitive Materials. If you would like to submit a concern specific to the audit (which may be released in the next few months), you may do so by visiting: <https://olag.utleg.gov/shareConcern.jsp> (select Sensitive Materials Review under the dropdown menu).
2. Parent Liaison—It looks like you may have contacted the USBE's Parent Liaison and Engagement Education Specialist, Cassie Hays, directly. If not, the Parent Liaison may be able to help you navigate available complaint processes at the local or USBE level or answer questions related to parental rights. We have not made a referral to the Parent Liaison directly. However, if you would like their assistance, you may contact Cassie Hays directly at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].
3. Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC)—The UPPAC is tasked with investigating alleged educator misconduct and makes recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding action that could be taken against an educator's license. Rule [277-217](#) covers required and prohibited contact for educators as well as the reporting requirements for school districts and charter schools, and Rule [277-330](#) includes additional requirements and expectations for school administrators.

Please note that UPPAC can only investigate misconduct by licensed educators, and not all school personnel or coaches are or are required to be licensed. The state provides an educator lookup tool that can be accessed [here](#). If you believe a licensed educator has violated laws or educator standards, you may submit a complaint directly to UPPAC by clicking [here](#), or you can call [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED].

Please contact UPPAC directly if you have any questions about its process for handling allegations of educator misconduct. See also rules R277-210 through R277-217, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

4. Utah Elected Officials—You could also reach out to your elected representatives to seek changes to current laws regarding sensitive materials, oversight of local school boards, or to encourage new legislation or rules that specifically addresses reviews of sensitive materials as you suggest. You can find contact information for your representatives at the following:
 - Utah House and Senate Representatives—If you would like to contact your legislative representatives to share your concerns, you can find contact information by visiting: <https://le.utah.gov/GIS/findDistrict.jsp>.
 - Additionally, as your concerns relate to public education, you may want to share your experiences and concerns with related legislative committees (e.g., [Education Interim](#), etc.).
 - State School Board or Board Representative—If you would like to directly contact your state school board representative or other state school board members, you can find this information by visiting: <https://www.schools.utah.gov/board/> (see Board Districts Map and Board Members).
5. [Utah State Court's Self-Help Center \(SHC\)](#)—The SHC staff attorneys can answer questions about the law, court process, provide information about resources and public law libraries, or give additional contact information for legal programs or lawyer referral services. Contact the SHC directly to find out the scope of resources and help that they can provide.

We recognize that this does not immediately resolve your concerns, but the IAD appreciates you contacting the Public Education Hotline and we hope you find the referral and information and potential resources above helpful.

Best regards,

Internal Audit Department | Utah State Board of Education

250 E 500 S | PO Box 144200 | Salt Lake City, 84114-4200

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Disclaimer –

This e-mail transmission and any documents, files, or previous e-mail messages attached to it may contain CONFIDENTIAL information. If you are not the intended recipient or a person responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, any disclosure, copying, distribution or any use of any of the information in this transmission is strictly prohibited. If you have received this transmission in error, please notify me immediately by reply e-mail or by telephone and destroy the original transmission and its attachments without reading, printing, distributing or saving them in any manner. Furthermore, all communications not protected under Utah Code 63G-2-305 may be subject to public disclosure. Thank you.

From: Brooke Stephens <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 9:40 PM
To: Audit & Fraud <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Fw: Davis School District continues to provide pornographic literature to children

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Sorry! I misread it and sent it to Cassie first. I was supposed to send it to this email. I have already submitted reconsideration requests with my district, month after month, but I believe that they need to be more proactive and so I am escalating it with suggestions that may help them take this problem more seriously.

From: Brooke Stephens
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2025 9:31 PM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Emily Price <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Kristen Hogan <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Davis School District continues to provide pornographic literature to children

Dear USBE Parent Hotline,

Despite a [law being passed in 2022](#) that "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality" have no serious value to minors, Davis School District continues to make illegal content available to minors. Due to my consistently discovering illegal books month after month, I am left to conclude that they have not been sufficiently proactive in discovering and removing it, nor alerting parents to the reports which could be used to opt their child out of harmful content. I have attached screenshots below showing that the schools have the content in their libraries, and attached reports, which show illegal content.

I have offered to work with my district to help train the librarians on the many resources they can use to find illegal content, but was told that the librarians are already too busy. I am hoping that the USBE may want to create a solution as the schools cannot find the time or resources to protect children from harmful, addictive and illegal content. I assert that [matters of mental health and lifetime addiction](#) are no

trivial matter and should be considered worth the time and energy to prevent. It is absurd that schools are allowed to break the law until parents call them out on it.

Another concerning lack of action is the delay in returning results on challenges. There are book challenges from 5/13, and two from 5/25 that still have not reported any results. Tooele school district has also been failing to report results on challenges in a timely matter, and I fear it is due to not wanting to report to the USBE and therefore contribute to the statewide removal law.

I have some suggestions. I would like to see offending districts, meaning districts that are found to have illegal content, be required to enroll their librarians in an "Illegal book detection" training and commit to one hour a month serving in this capacity. The process isn't difficult, and many hands make light work. If librarians are not open to protecting children, then new librarians should take their place. **For potentially illegal books, such as books rated a 3, which is equivalent to an R rating, objective reports with page numbers and excerpts, such as ours, should be listed on the website so parents can opt their children out of checking out these books.** Having an opt-out policy without any way to see what they would be opting them out of is just a jest at transparency. I can provide a list of rated 3 books, as well. You can view all of our reports on my website, RatedBooks.org.

Schools can and should do better, but it appears they need more motivation than just the health of children or the opportunity to do right by them and their parents. A monetary fine may also work to motivate them, and could be used to fund a separate entity that reviews these books for them.

Please help districts follow the law, and be more proactive and transparent in this process. They are failing to protect our children.

Sincerely,

Brooke Stephens

Below are the reports of books I have found just last week, and does not include books from past months. I can provide those if requested. Some are even worse. Unfortunately, I have found I cannot paste anything in these emails or it will be rejected. But it's not rejected from being given to kids.

Americanah	Chimamanda N Adichie	https://tinyurl.com/3pc6hzxz
Eat, Pray, Love	Elizabeth Gilbert	https://tinyurl.com/mpsevrpr
Brave New World (Book)	Aldous Huxley	https://tinyurl.com/mtj3usyd
Lonesome Dove	Larry McMurtry	https://tinyurl.com/ypsmxuah
Bronxwood	Coe Booth	https://tinyurl.com/yc5xfm2a
Rainbow Boys	Alex Sanchez	https://tinyurl.com/3wsf4arb
The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo (sex between adult and a minor)	Taylor Jenkins Reid	https://tinyurl.com/4z7ekutr
Rabbit & Robot	Andrew Smith	https://tinyurl.com/42jdj9ub

