



Board of Education
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
1500 East 128th Avenue
Thornton, CO 80241-2601

July 25, 2013

Dear Members of Adams 12 Five Star Schools Board of Education:

On behalf of our 718,000 members and activists, we urge you to reject attempts to censor Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* from your high school curriculum.

As Legacy High School students have noted in their petition supporting *The Bluest Eye*, no student has been forced to read the book and no teacher has been forced to teach it. Instead, the students are "asking that teachers be allowed to retain the freedom to choose what reading materials they would like, or not like, to teach in their classrooms."

Since it was first published in 1970, *The Bluest Eye* has been the target of censorship attempts because of its frank portrayal of racism and sexual assault. But shielding high school students from these subjects and from Morrison's discussion of them does nothing to eliminate them from the world. Instead, Morrison's nuanced discussions of difficult issues serve to help readers understand, discuss, and confront those issues.

Additionally, the students point out in their petition that censoring this piece of literature could set a troubling precedent: "If one book is banned from being taught in a classroom setting, then it opens the door for all books – and ideas – to be banned as well."

Our nation's schools are meant to be places that encourage the free exchange of ideas. The concerns of a small number of parents and students should not serve to deny all your students the opportunity to read and learn from this important work of American literature. We urge you to reject these attempts at censorship.

Sincerely,

Michael Keegan
President, People For the American Way Foundation