

Joel Bondurant

From: John Coble <jhcoble@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 12:12 PM
To: Joel Bondurant
Subject: Re: LNC Poet X Curriculum Decision

Mr. XXX,

Please know It is important that our stakeholders share their concerns and opinions with us, even if they differ from our own views. You and your family are a member of our community and your voice is important to us.

We empathize that you have concerns about content in the literary selection. We want to share our view.

At LNC, we seek and value diverse thought and a range of opinions and perspectives to expand our awareness, stretch our thinking and ultimately help us grow as a school. Our focus is to best serve our students and prepare them for life after graduation. This view is also why we seek experiences for our students to help develop their awareness of the experience and lives of others who perhaps hail from a different part of the globe, possess different backgrounds or skin tones or hold ideologies unfamiliar to them. It is through that same lens that we welcome your questions relating to our process for selecting curriculum materials, including literature, prose and other non-fiction works.

Our teachers are professionals and experts in their fields. We trust their judgment, knowing they understand and consider their students' stage of development and level of maturity. When studying a selection with their students, our teachers situate the text within social and historical context to allow our students a window into another's perspective which in turn allows them to better understand their own identity in relation to the world. For all selections, our teachers guide the students with intelligent academic discussion and supplemental materials. They explore the text together, including the author's purpose and the characters' feelings, actions, situations and circumstances.

We take any concern from an LNC stakeholder seriously. If a constituent expresses a concern or is not comfortable with the subject matter of our curriculum materials, such as a literary choice selected for class, we accommodate those requests and offer an alternative selection. No selection is mandatory.

Poet X is written by Elizabeth Acevedo, and is an example of contemporary poetry. It is read and studied in the fall by some of our 9th grade English I students. Poet X is a highly-acclaimed literary work and has won many awards, including the National Book Award for Young People's Literature in 2018, the Printz Award in 2019 and the Carnegie Medal in 2019. It appears on many recommended book lists for young adults including [WCNC's top ten "Books to Read" list](#).

Poet X is a coming of age story about a 15-year-old protagonist named Xiomara Bautista. Xiomara is a young Dominican-American woman growing up in present day Harlem, NY. Over the course of the novel, Xiomara struggles with her faith, relationships, and finding her place in the world. But when Xiomara discovers slam poetry, she finds a source of comfort and agency that she had not yet experienced before. Poetry affords Xiomara the opportunity to express herself and make her voice heard. More information about the book can be found at [Commonsense Media](#).

We strongly believe that preparing our students for success beyond high school goes well outside of strictly academic readiness and extends to introducing them to different thoughts and ideas, oftentimes through literature; books allow our students to access a world different from theirs and “meet” people, of varied backgrounds, races, ethnicities, experiences, social-economic circumstance and more. To send our graduates off into a world without this preparation can lead to the same ending as sending them off ill-equipped academically. What students can learn through literature and subsequent conversations with informed peers and teachers, is invaluable as they grow to be critical thinkers and well-rounded members of our society.

Yours,

A large rectangular area of the document is redacted with a light gray background, obscuring the signature and any text that might have been present.

