

## Abilene ISD

### Executive Summary

The November 17, 2025 SLAC Meeting focused on transparency, legislative alignment with SB 13, responsible stewardship of library collections, and fair consideration of challenged books. Key outcomes included the election of a chairperson, review of purchase recommendations, in-depth discussion of book challenges, and identification of titles requiring further review.

### Highlights

- **SB 13 Compliance:** Meeting procedures, parent communication systems, and challenge protocols reviewed and affirmed.
- **Chairperson Elected:** Eric Lemmons was unanimously approved as SLAC Chair.
- **Collection Development:** Librarians presented EFB (LOCAL) standards, emphasizing diverse viewpoints, developmental appropriateness, and literary quality.
- **Purchase List Approved:** All recommended titles approved unanimously, with several marked for second review before shelving.
- **Book Challenges:** Committee held substantive, nuanced discussions for each challenged book, considering context, literary merit, statutory definitions of “harmful material,” and community values.
- **Next Steps:** Additional review of certain titles, exploration of a parent-access waiver for YA materials, and preparation for December challenge deliberations.

This summary provides the public with a clear understanding of the meeting’s purpose, discussions, and outcomes while supporting full transparency in accordance with SB 13.

## **School Library Advisory Council (SLAC)**

### **Combined Meeting Agenda & Public Review Notes**

**Meeting Date: November 17, 2025**

**Location: One AISD – Crockett Room, 241 Pine Street**

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#### **1. Call to Order**

**Presenter:** Lyndsey Williamson, Executive Director of Secondary Education

- Meeting called to order at 4:30 PM
  - This is a public meeting; the door remained open throughout
  - Meeting was audio-recorded and will be posted to the district website within 10 days
  - Public attendees were asked to allow the meeting to proceed without interruptions
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#### **2. Introductions**

All members introduced themselves along with their role in the district and on the SLAC committee.

- Voting and non-voting members confirmed (see attendance sheet)
  - Notable roles included campus librarians, district English teachers, administrators, and community representatives
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#### **3. Senate Bill (SB) 13 Review**

##### **Purpose of SB 13**

- Increases parent insight and voice regarding library materials
- Provides parents and community members the right to challenge library books

##### **Challenge Process Overview**

1. Challenge form submitted by a parent or community member
2. The challenged book is immediately removed from circulation pending review
3. SLAC reviews the challenge and submits recommendations to the school board

4. The school board makes the final decision

### **Parent Notification & Access**

- Parents now receive automated email alerts when their child checks out a library book.
- Parent Portal allows:
  - Viewing student checkout history
  - Searching titles
  - Blocking specific books for their child

### **Restrictions Under SB 13**

Library materials **may not contain**:

- Indecent content
  - Profane content
  - “Harmful to Minors” material (as defined in statute, including prurient interest, patently offensive content, or lack of literary/scientific value for minors)
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### **4. SLAC Committee Chairperson Election**

- Nominations opened for a voting member to serve as chairperson.
  - **Eric Lemmons** volunteered and was approved with no objections.
  - Board approval will occur at the next school board meeting.
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### **5. Book Selection & Weeding Criteria**

**Presenter:** Kate Stover, Abilene High School Librarian

#### **EFB (LOCAL) – Collection Development Overview**

Materials selected should:

- Support TEKS and district curriculum
- Present multiple viewpoints
- Include accurate and authentic content
- Represent diverse cultures and voices

- Encourage critical thinking, appreciation for literature, and enjoyment of reading

### **Selection Factors Include:**

- Professional book reviews
- National/state award lists
- Gaps in current collection
- Student interest and developmental needs

### **Weeding Criteria**

Books may be removed due to:

1. Damage
2. Outdated or inaccurate content
3. Zero circulation in 5+ years
4. Vulgar or inappropriate content

*Note: Libraries weed one section at a time each year, not the entire library.*

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## **6. Books Recommended for Purchase**

- Committee reviewed proposed purchase lists via Google Drive and Titlewave.
- Books flagged for “Special Consideration” by librarians had detailed notes attached.
- Public posting requirement met (30 days with no objections received).

### **Discussion Points**

- YA (Young Adult) designations vary by publisher; SLAC will continue deep-reviewing YA titles.
- Parent request option: SLAC will explore developing a parent waiver allowing a child access to YA-restricted books.
- Several titles were flagged for “**Hold for Second Review Before Shelving**”:
  - *Influenced*
  - *Girl in Pieces*
  - *God of the Woods*
  - *Your Final Moments*
  - *Night Owls*
  - *Pick the Lock*
  - *Such Lovely Skin*

- *Through Our Teeth*
- *When the Devil Signs*
- *The Whispering*
- *True Crimes* (AHS librarian reviewing first in series prior to purchase)

### **Committee Vote – Books for Purchase**

Unanimous **YES** vote from all 7 voting members.

- Recommendation will be presented to the AISD School Board for approval at the December 8th school board meeting.

## **7. Book Challenges – Review & Discussion**

Voting members used the approved options:

1. Retain the material: Keep the book in its original location and collection.
2. Retain the material: Move the book to a different section or campus OR flag the book for certain ages.
3. Remove the material: Withdraw the book from the collection entirely.
4. I choose to abstain from voting and am requesting additional time to review the book.

If any voting member selects “I choose to abstain” the book moves to the next meeting for consideration after voting SLAC members have more time to review the book.

### **Book 1: *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter***

- Committee carefully reviewed transcripts and challenge documents.
- Significant discussion centered on cultural representation, Latina identity, and family expectations.  
Members emphasized the rarity of authentic Mexican American representation.
- The contested scene was reviewed; committee agreed it did not meet harmful material criteria.
- Themes of grief, identity, and mental health were acknowledged as high-value.
- Parents may use checkout alerts and book blocks for added oversight.\*\*
- Reviewed challenge documents and member commentary.
- Discussion included cultural representation, teenage themes, and parent notification tools.

### **Book 2: *The Art of Racing in the Rain***

- Committee reviewed circulation: no checkouts in 5 years.  
Meets weeding criteria based on circulation.
- YA adaptation available at Cooper.
- Emotional themes acknowledged but removal based on low use, not content.\*\*
- Meets weeding criteria; not checked out in 5 years.
- YA adaptation available.

### **Book 3: *The Bluest Eye***

- Committee engaged in extensive discussion of literary value and sensitive themes.
- Acknowledged as a cornerstone text in American literature.  
Sensitive scenes reviewed in context; book does not glorify harm.
- Members stressed its relevance in discussing trauma, racism, and generational harm.
- Recognized as containing serious literary, cultural, and educational merit.\*\*
- Extensive discussion regarding literary merit vs. sensitive content.  
(See recording for full discussion.)

### **Break: 6:00–6:12 PM**

### **Book 4: *The Glass Castle***

- Committee found the memoir deeply authentic and resonant.
- Reflects real experiences of rural poverty, instability, and resilience.
- Sexual content is not graphic and is portrayed as dangerous, not desirable.
- Highlights education as a path to freedom.
- Praised for inspiring student empathy
- Committee discussed memoir content, trauma themes, and educational value.

### **Book 5: *The Haters***

- Committee opinions varied widely.
- Some found it humorous and relatable for reluctant teen readers.
- Others criticized crude humor, limited literary merit, and racial stereotypes.  
Key finding: no sexual acts described; challenged passages were taken out of context.
- Circulation is low; relocation to upper grade levels was discussed.
- Members cautioned against removal based solely on taste to avoid precedent.
- Committee discussed circulation data and differing opinions on appropriateness.  
(See Otter transcripts for full dialogue.)

### **Book 6 – *Identical***

- Committee discussions indicated this novel contains intense themes surrounding trauma, family dysfunction, and identity.
- Members noted that Ellen Hopkins’ style (novel-in-verse) powerfully conveys the emotional turmoil of the characters.
- Conversations reflected awareness of the book’s raw content but also its literary recognition and relevance for teens dealing with real-world issues.

### **Book 7 – *Kingdom of the Cursed***

- Committee acknowledged the book’s popularity among teens for its fantasy and romance elements.
- Members reviewed circulation trends and discussed the appropriateness of sensual elements typical of the genre.
- No statutory “harmful to minors” violations were identified, but some felt it is better suited for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences.

### **Book 8 – *Kingdom of the Feared***

- Similar to the previous title, the committee noted it contains mature romantic themes.
- Members reviewed circulation and agreed that while the content is intense, it aligns with typical YA fantasy trends suitable for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences.

### **Book 9 – *The Kite Runner***

- Committee recognized this as a globally acclaimed novel exploring war, betrayal, guilt, and redemption.
- Difficult scenes—including assault and violence—were acknowledged as heavy but contextually essential to the narrative.
- Members discussed its long academic history and value in teaching cultural awareness.
- Suitable for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences

### **Book 10 – *The Lovely Bones***

- Committee noted the novel’s sensitive themes of loss, violence, and grief from a child narrator.
- Transcripts indicated acknowledgment of its emotional depth and ability to help students process difficult themes.
- Circulation remains steady, suggesting ongoing student interest.

### **Book 11 – *Me, Earl, and the Dying Girl***

- Members discussed the book’s blend of humor and grief, acknowledging its appeal to reluctant readers.
- Some raised concerns over crude humor, while others emphasized the realistic portrayal of awkward adolescence.
- The depiction of friendship during terminal illness was recognized as meaningful.

- Suitable for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences

**Book 12 – *Nineteen Minutes***

- Committee noted the heavy nature of the school-shooting topic.
- Members highlighted the realism of the narrative and the empathy it builds around all parties involved, including perpetrators’ families.
- The book’s psychological depth was emphasized as a strength.
- Suitable for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences

**Book 13 – *The Poet X***

- Committee noted the novel’s strong cultural and emotional voice.
- Written in verse, it explores identity, faith, autonomy, and finding one’s voice.
- Transcripts show members felt its themes are relatable and empowering for many teens—especially young teen females.

**Book 14 – *Sold***

- Members described this as one of the most emotionally powerful reads.
- Discussions focused on its portrayal of human trafficking, written in short, poetic vignettes.
- The book was praised for raising awareness of global issues and for helping some readers articulate experiences of abuse.
- Suitable for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences

**Book 15 – *Speak***

- Committee discussed the book’s longstanding importance in addressing sexual assault and trauma.
- The rape scene is handled symbolically, not graphically.
- Members emphasized its value in giving voice to silent struggles many teens face.

**Book 16 – *13 Reasons Why***

- Discussion centered on teen suicide, media adaptation concerns, and potential impact on vulnerable readers
- Members acknowledged differing opinions: some felt it could help generate conversations; others feared triggering effects
- The book was viewed as powerful but potentially best suited for older teens or with parent oversight
- Suitable for Advanced Placement Language and Literature audiences

**Book 17 – *Will Grayson, Will Grayson***

- Committee discussion highlighted the novel’s themes of identity, sexuality, and friendship
- Members appreciated the dual narration

- Circulation indicates continued interest

**Book 18 – *Kendra***

- Considered for weeding based on circulation.

**Book 19 – *Boy Toy***

- Book meets criteria for weeding.
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**Next Steps**

- Votes collected through Google Form.
  - Books requiring additional time will appear on the December meeting agenda.
  - Special Consideration titles flagged for second review before shelving.
  - Parent access/waiver discussion item added to next meeting.
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**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned by Lyndsey Williamson after completion of agenda.

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**These SLAC Meeting Agenda Notes are prepared for public review and transparency in accordance with SB 13 requirements.**

Added 11/19/25

A Google Form was used by the voting SLAC members. Each member chose their recommendation for the challenged book. They chose from 4 options (listed in meeting minutes above). Below are the results and the action the SLAC will recommend to the school board on December 8, 2025.

Book Title	Author(s)	Library	SLAC Decision
I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter	Erika Sanchez	AHS, CHS, LIFT	<b>5-Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL)</b> 2-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EJ, MJ)
The Art of Racing in the Rain	Garth Stein	CHS	<b>6- Remove from collection (KB, AJ, WR, EL, EJ, MJ)</b> 1- Retain in original location (DL)

The Bluest Eye	Toni Morrison	CHS	<b>4- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR)</b> 3-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EL, EJ, MJ)
The Glass Castle	Jeannette Walls	AHS, CHS, The LIFT	<b>6- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL, MJ)</b> 1- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EJ)
Identical	Ellen Hopkins	AHS, CHS	2- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (KB, EL) <b>5- Remove from collection (DL, AJ, WR, EJ, MJ)</b>
Kingdom of the Cursed	Kerri Maniscalco	CHS	1-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EL) <b>6- Remove from collection (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EJ, MJ)</b>
Kingdom of the Feared	Kerri Maniscalco	AHS	1-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EL) <b>6- Remove from collection (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EJ, MJ)</b>
Kite Runner	Khaled Hosseini	AHS, CHS, LIFT	2- Retain in original location (DL, AJ) <b>5-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (KB, WR, EL, EJ, MJ)</b>
The Lovely Bones	Alice Sebold	AHS	<b>5- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL)</b> 2- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EJ, MJ)
Nineteen Minutes	Jodi Piccoult	AHS	<b>6- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL, EJ)</b> 1- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (MJ)
Poet X	Elizabeth Acevedo	AHS	<b>5- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL)</b> 2- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (EJ, MJ)
Sold	Patricia McCorick	AHS	<b>6- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL, EJ)</b> 1- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (MJ)
Speak	Laura Halse Anderson	AHS, CHS	<b>7- Retain in original location (ALL)</b>
Thirteen Reasons Why	Jay Asher	AHS, Mann, Clack	2- Retain but reclassify to upper HS (KB, AJ) <b>5- Remove from collection (DL, WR, EL, EJ, MJ)</b>
Will Grayson, Will Grayson	John Green, David Leviathan	AHS, CHS	<b>5- Retain in original location (KB, DL, AJ, WR, EL)</b> 2- Remove from collection (EJ, MJ)
Kendra	Coe Booth	AHS	<b>7- Remove (weeding/circulation) -ALL</b>
Boy Toy	Bary Lyga	AHS	<b>7- Remove (weeding/circulation)- ALL</b>
The Haters	Jesse Andrews	AHS	3-Retain in original location (EL) 1-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (KB) 2-Remove from collection (DL, EJ, MJ) <b>1- Abstain and review further (AJ, WR)</b> (book will be revisited at Dec SLAC Meeting)
Me and Earl and The Dying Girl	Jesse Andrews	AHS, CHS	4- Remove from collection (DL, WR, EJ, MJ) 2-Retain but reclassify to upper HS (KB, EL) <b>1- Abstain and review further (AJ)</b> (book will be revisited at Dec SLAC Meeting)

