



May 7, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing on behalf of the Oregon Library Association (OLA) and the Oregon Association of School Libraries (OASL), a division of OLA, to express our support for Oregon Battle of the Books' (OBOB) inclusion of the book *George* by Alex Gino on the 3rd to 5th Grade Division title list.

For each book chosen by the OBOB title selection committee, members take into thoughtful consideration many factors, including:

- Grade/reading level, including publishers' suggested age ranges;
- A variety of subject areas, plots, settings, and styles;
- Balanced interest for all genders and wide range of maturity levels within divisions;
- A variety of genres: realistic fiction, nonfiction, fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, mystery, multicultural, and Oregon representation;
- Reviews from established literary reviewers and publications;
- Awards (Newbery, Oregon Reader's Choice, etc.); and
- Comments from OBOB coordinators in schools around the state, both during the selection process and before the reading lists are finalized.

*George* satisfied all of these criteria and received no negative comments during the review period before the lists were finalized. While not every book will match the reading interest of every reader or family, the OBOB selection committee has a responsibility to meet the varied interests of all students, as well as reflect the lived realities of the many students call Oregon their home.

OBOB's mission is to encourage reading and broaden reading interests while also promoting cooperative learning. It is not a part of any school's official curriculum. Participation in the program is optional, as is reading any particular title; teams often divide up the titles among themselves.

Any decision on whether to have a student participate in OBOB or read a specific book is most appropriately made by a student's parents or guardians, who can best determine if their student's intellectual and emotional development matches the book's content. We are disappointed that some schools and districts are not giving families the opportunity to make these decisions for themselves.

We are proud of the over ten-year history of OBOB. OBOB has introduced thousands of students to books on numerous topics, written by authors of varied backgrounds, and included subjects both mundane and challenging. *George* fits squarely within this proud tradition. We eagerly anticipate the 2018-19 OBOB season and believe that students, parents, and school staff alike will find the books and the experience to be rewarding.

Sincerely,



Paige Battle  
President  
Oregon Association of School Libraries



Buzzy Nielsen  
President  
Oregon Library Association

**For further information**

*About OBOB, OASL, or OLA:*

Paige Battle  
President, 2017-18  
Oregon Library Association  
president@oasl.olaweb.org  
503-916-5160 x81074

Buzzy Nielsen  
President, 2017-18  
Oregon Library Association  
olapresident@olaweb.org  
541-447-7978 x301

*About students' freedom to read and related issues:*

James LaRue  
Director  
Office for Intellectual Freedom  
American Library Association  
312-280-4222  
jlarue@ala.org

Media interested in scheduling interviews with ALA spokespersons may contact Steve Zalusky, Communications Specialist of ALA's Communications and Marketing Office; 312-280- 1546; szalusky@ala.org.