

## **FL Education Update and Key Actions**

Jennifer Cowart, MD with Public School Defenders February 9, 2023

- 1. 2023 HB1: Defunds public education in name of "choice"
  - a. Pulls \$4 billion from (already underfunded) public schools to private schools
  - b. Voucher programs have <u>no</u> evidence of effectiveness in FL or other states
  - c. Voucher schools are majority non-accredited and majority religious
  - d. We should be focused on improving and funding public education instead
  - e. WHAT TO DO:
    - i. Call and email your state legislators
    - ii. Email templates online can help (use them both and SHARE):
      - 1. Families for Strong Public Schools
      - 2. Moms Rising
    - iii. Learn more: Education Researcher Now Opposes Vouchers
- 2. 2022 HB 1557, 1467, 7: Book Bans across the state
  - a. Combo of laws increased review of all books in classrooms and libraries
  - b. FLDOE rules state violations of 1467 will lead to felony charges for school staff
  - c. Schools are fearful and banning books above state rules
  - d. Book bans are anti-freedom, unpopular, and keep our kids from learning
  - e. WHAT TO DO:
    - i. ATTEND A SCHOOL BOARD MEETING (and bring friends)
      - 1. DCPS: March 7 at 6 pm
      - 2. SJCSD: March 14 at 4 pm
    - ii. Call and email your school board members (often!)
      - 1. DCPS: https://dcps.duvalschools.org/Page/9201
      - 2. SJCSD: https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/board/
    - iii. Learn More: <a href="https://www.fftrp.org/">https://www.fftrp.org/</a>
- 3. Censorship is <u>rising</u> across our counties
  - a. DCPS Douglas Anderson censored play "Indecent"
  - b. State law did not require this-DCPS made this decision
  - c. School staff, parents, PTAs are "self-censoring" ahead of these laws
  - d. WHAT TO DO:
    - i. DA play: sign their petition and share at <a href="Change.org">Change.org</a>
    - ii. Follow local news and SHARE THIS INFO
    - iii. Know the laws and stand up against "obeying in advance"

We must be an informed, active resistance. We must talk to our friends and neighbors regardless of political affiliation, knowing that books bans and censorship are unpopular while public schools are popular. We must envision a robust public school system and fight all attempts to move away from that vision.

<u>publicschooldefenders.com</u> and <u>www.facebook.com/publicschooldefendersduval</u>