

**Resource Review Public Meeting #1 *Queen of Shadows* Minutes**  
**Friday, November 11, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. at WESB Conference Room**

**Committee Members:**

- Mr. Timothy Murtha- Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson
- Ms. Andrea Rusk- Brainerd High School Principal
- Mr. James Conrad- Elementary School Principal
- Mr. Jonathan Anderson- Forestview Middle School Principal
- Ms. Robin Knutson- District Librarian and Media Specialist at Forestview Middle School
- Ms. Jessica Mauro- District Advisory Committee Member #1
- Ms. Martha Rustad- District Advisory Committee Member #2
- Mr. Randy Heidmann- ISD181 School Board Member
- Mr. Guy Kelm- Elementary School Teacher
- Ms. Helene Danielson- Forestview Middle School Teacher
- XXXXXXXXXXXX- Student Liaison at Brainerd High School
- Ms. Karla Shepherd-Johnson- Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary

**Meeting Notes:**

- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson began the meeting at 1:01 p.m. and conducted roll call. All members were not present.
  - In-person present at the meeting: Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson, Forestview Middle School Principal, ISD181 School Board Member, Student Liaison at Brainerd High School, and Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary.
  - Present at the meeting through Google Meet: Forestview Middle School Teacher, District Advisory Committee Member #1, and District Advisory Committee Member #2. The Brainerd High School Principal joined the Google Meet at 1:16 p.m.
  - Not present online or in-person: Elementary School Principal, District Librarian and Media Specialist at Forestview Middle School, and Elementary School Teacher.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson stated that everyone on the board has the book *Queen of Shadows* by: Sarah J. Maas.
  - The Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary said she did not have a copy of it.
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said the Brainerd High School Principal has it and she will give it to her.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson had an extra book at the end of the meeting, so he gave that copy to the Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said someone needs to be the Committee Chairperson.
  - There was a few minutes of silence. No one was volunteering to be Chair in-person or on the Google Meet.
  - The Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary said she would volunteer to take notes and be the Secretary. The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said that position is next on the agenda.

- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said he would volunteer to be Chair, even though he does not prefer to be Chair.
  - The District Advisory Committee Member #2 seconded the motion.
- The Forestview Middle School Principal asked who our community people are Ms. Rustad and who else.
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said Ms. Mauro is our other community member.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked if everyone approved of his motion to be Chair.
  - Everyone that was present approved of this motion, except for the Forestview Middle School Principal.
    - The Forestview Middle School Principal asked if he could explain why he opposes.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said yes, he could explain.
    - The Forestview Middle School Principal explained that he opposes Mr. Murtha to be Chair because in his opinion, he did not think the Chairperson should be someone working for the school district. He said he believes one of the District Advisory Committee members should be. He explained that he does not think Mr. Murtha is going to skew anything, but he said the perception in the community could be taken as such.
    - There was silence from the other committee members. No one else volunteered to be the Chairperson, so Mr. Murtha is the Committee Chairperson.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said he recommends the Brainerd High School Teacher to be Secretary and take notes.
  - The ISD181 School Board Member seconded. He said she volunteered and that was very nice of her.
  - No one opposed the Brainerd High School Teacher to be secretary.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson read aloud the complainant's request for reevaluation of a resource. "I saw it reviewed on BookLooks.org- Only adult audience 18 and over. I read some of the content. It was pornographic and contained pages of sexual nudity, obscene sexual activity, mild profanity, and violence."
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said that on the second meeting, the complainant will have the opportunity to speak to the committee members.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said the complainant has not read the book in its entirety.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson read aloud the back page of the complainant's request for reevaluation of a resource form. The complainant wrote, "I noted at least 20 sexually pornographic examples/texts recorded, some paragraphs/ pages long. Warning contains explicit sexual nudity, sexual activities, violence, and profanity. Profanity includes 'ass' 28 times, 'bitch' 11 times, 'piss' 28 times, 'prick' 14 times, and 'shit' 60 times. Questions about the book: How does it apply to your mission statement for children? Does it cause shame for child? Would they hide it from an adult/parent?"

- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said the bright yellow sheet is the committee members' homework. He said the tabulation is not the decision of the committee-we will vote as a committee in the end.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson read the seven statements on the Resource Selection Guidelines handout.
  - "1. Supports and is consistent with the general educational goals of District ISD181 and the goals and objectives of the individual school and specific course.
  - 2. Was selected to support and enrich the individual school curriculum and to meet the personal needs of the students.
  - 3. Is appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles and social development of students for whom the materials are selected.
  - 4. Provides a background of information which will motivate students to examine their own attitudes and behavior, to comprehend their duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges as participating citizens in our society, and to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
  - 5. Was selected for the atypical students, as well as the average student.
  - 6. Was selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses and shall be judged as a whole.
  - 7. Supports the academic standard for age, grade, and content area."
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said this report of reevaluation was used to handle classroom books, not intended for independent choice novels. He said there are three options to answer the seven statements: "N/A" not applicable, "No," or "Yes." A lot of time was spent on these three options on the last committee. He asked if anyone has questions on this part.
  - No one had any questions.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson reviewed the responsibilities of the committee and read aloud the expectations for proceedings.
  - "3a. All testimony must be about the specific questioned resource.
  - 3b. This is not a debate, and any attempt to debate will be ruled out of order.
  - 3c. Time limits for speakers will be followed.
  - 3d. Once the committee begins discussion, the non-committee attendees may participate only at the request of the committee members."
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked the committee members to read the red form individually, which is the draft of the Friday, December 15 meeting. The committee members were given time to read it.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said to the Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary that he could slow down if need be, just to let him know.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked the committee members to look at the #6 statement on the back of the red handout. He read the following aloud.
  - "Testimony- 30 mins. Each side will be provided with equal time to present their positions. They may subdivide their time to multiple speakers or just one as they see fit. Committee members may ask questions after the testimony has been given so as to not

deny the presenters their allotted time. All speakers must be identified to the Director of Teaching and Learning in advance to be placed on this agenda.

- Removal of Resource
  - Testimony for Removal- 10 mins
  - Committee Questions- 5 mins
- Retention of Resource
  - Testimony for Retention- 10 mins
  - Committee Questions- 5 mins”
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson mentioned the committee will discuss, there will be a roll call vote, and then the decision will be recorded.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked if everyone was comfortable with the agenda for meeting #2.
  - The ISD181 School Board member asked if he was referring to the red sheet.
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said “Yes.” He also mentioned it was the same agenda as the last Resource Review meeting #2.
    - The Forestview Middle School Principal said he approved the agenda for meeting #2.
    - The Brainerd High School Teacher and Secretary seconded the motion.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked if there was any discussion that needed to happen or if anyone had any questions.
    - No one opposed; unanimous with quorum; the agenda #2 passed.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said when it comes to the final decision, it will be a roll call vote. He reminded the committee members there will be signatures required at the end of that form, **so committee members will need to be in person for that meeting**. He also reminded everyone that seven people constitutes a quorum.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked if anyone had any questions on that.
  - There were no questions from the committee members.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said everything was completed for this meeting.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said the next meeting is on **Friday, December 15, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. in room 200 WESB 804 Oak Street Brainerd, MN.**
- The ISD181 School Board Member said he had one question on the actual request. He said he wants to make sure he understands. He asked where this resource is located (referring to what school(s) it is in).
  - The ISD181 School Board Member said the complainant circled on the Request for Reevaluation of a Resource form that it is located at BHS North, BHS South, and FMS, but the ISD181 School Board Member said he was under the impression that the resource is located only at the high school.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said that the ISD181 School Board Member was correct. The resource is only at BHS, not at Forestview Middle School. He also said there is no BHS South Campus anymore.

- The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson asked if there was anything else for the good of the cause. He said he wanted to thank everyone for coming to this meeting and he thanked the student representative for coming as well. He wished everyone a great Warrior Day.
- A community member that is not on the committee asked if they could make a correction. This person said they do not believe that the resource is only at BHS. This person said the book is listed in the Destiny catalog as an e-book.
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said if that information is correct, he will make that correction. He said he would check with the District Librarian and Media Specialist at Forestview Middle School.
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said Destiny is not accurate.
    - The community member asked how else could kids find out what books to check out if it is not accurate.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said the resource was checked out at the high school.
    - The community member said verify your facts.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said we would and he said thank you to the community person.
    - The community member thanked him as well.
    - The community member asked if the second meeting was in the same room.
    - The Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson said yes, it would be.
- A Brainerd Dispatch employee asked the Director of Teaching and Learning and Committee Chairperson the name of the complainant's name. He said the complainant's name is redacted.
- The meeting concluded at 1:31 p.m.