

## **Banned Books Week - Books Unite Us. versus Censorship Divides Us**

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**Banned Books Week** - Books Unite Us. versus Censorship Divides Us - *By Graeme Boyd, MS/HS Librarian*

September 26th - October 2nd 2021 is officially 'Banned Books Week'. Begun in 1982 and endorsed by such mainstream organizations as the American Library Association and PEN Center USA, 'Banned Books Week' is a reminder of the unifying power of stories and the divisiveness of censorship. This year's theme is "Books Unite Us. versus Censorship Divides Us" and underscores how books reach across boundaries and build connections between readers. LCS says it best: When we connect, we thrive.

Lincoln Community School is an increasingly inclusive school and our libraries aim to increase the learning experience for all students by offering an open, unbiased and neutral viewpoint of authors from all backgrounds and cultures. This week, as part of Banned Books Week, teachers have been discussing with their students the current and historical attempts to censor or ban books in all libraries in shared support of the freedom to seek and to express ideas, even ideas that contain uncomfortable truths. Such talking points provide great stimulus for student discussion and reflection and encourage the inquiring and open-minded attributes we encourage in our students as highlighted in the IB Learner Profile.

Our Librarians, Mr. Gideon and Ms. Ann have created wonderful displays in both our Middle and High School Libraries with specific examples of 'banned books'. They have also created a working document for all staff to add their own suggestions which additionally includes 'banned films'. Students (and teachers) are thrilled by reading a book that some authorities once outlawed! For instance *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell was banned in 1978 by the Anaheim Unified School District in California because of the 'immoral behavior' of its heroine, Scarlett O'Hara and more recently in 2019 the ever-popular Harry Potter book series was banned by St. Edward's Catholic School in Nashville because they were thought to 'conjure' evil spirits.

For further information : <https://bannedbooksweek.org/>