

# BISONLIBRARY

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Great Falls High School

**TO:** Dr. Bryan Dunn  
**FROM:** B.J. McCracken, Doug Deffé, and Jeremy Comstock  
**DATE:** January 8, 2007  
**RE:** Required Justification of Fat Kid Rules the World



Fat Kid Rules the World (hereinafter Fat Kid Rules) portrays the psychological misery of an overweight teen who feels isolated from life and people, without a place to belong. The story presents his contemplation of suicide, but then chronicles his growth and discovery of self-worth, illustrating the impact of positive choices without being didactically moralistic.

## Justification on Merits

K.L. Going's book Fat Kid Rules received a starred review in School Library Journal, Bulletin of the Center For Children's Books, and Booklist. It is part of a short list of books recommended by School Library Journal for body issues and is part of the Accelerated Reader program. In addition, it has received the following awards.

### AWARDS

- ALA Best Book for YA 2004  
(American Library Association)
- YALSA Best Book of the Decade List  
(Young Adult Library Services Association)
- Michael L. Printz Award For Excellence in Young Adult Literature  
2004: Honor Book (one of four titles honored in 2004)  
(The Printz Award is sponsored by Booklist, an ALA publication)
- Blue Ribbon Book: Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

However, more starkly compelling than all the starred reviews and awards are the simple words of a sixteen year old reader who chose not to commit suicide because of the book.

### FAT KID LOVES BOOK ABOUT FAT KID

I loved this book!! i could totally relate to it! i am 6 ft 4 and 330 lbs, and i loved that i found a book with a main character that i could relate to. like troy, i start to breathe very heavy when i walk, and like troy, i was suicidal before i read this book. this book showed me that you dont have to be super skinny to have a place in the world. i would reccomend this book to anyone who is insecure w/themselves (Review from Barnes and Noble web site, accessed 03 January 2007).

## **Justifications Addressing Board Policies**

GFPS Board (hereinafter Board) Policy 2310 INSTRUCTION - SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS states, "It is the objective of these libraries to provide a wide range of materials on all appropriate levels of difficulty, with diversity of appeal and presentation of different points of view." Fat Kid Rules falls within the parameters of that directive, as well as falling within the principles of the constitutionally protected First Amendment intellectual freedom also endorsed by the Board. The book is age appropriate for high school students, addresses the realities and social concerns of teens and represents an underrepresented population of students; those with male body perception issues.

Board Policy 2310R INSTRUCTION – LIBRARY MEDIA COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT directs librarians to "consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids." The title in question received several starred reviews from the most professional publications, including the ALA publication, School Library Journal. In addition to the reviews, as noted above, this title also received national recognition from such professionally prepared selection aids as identified in Board policy. In addition, this title is part of the nationally acclaimed and utilized Accelerated Reader Program.

Fat Kid Rules meets multiple elements of the Board material selection policies, but the following are most notable:

Be current 2310R 1) c),

Have aesthetic, literary or social value 2310R 1) d),

Be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level and social development of those for whom the materials are selected 2310R 1) e);

Be created by competent and qualified authors and producers 2310R 1) f); and,

Realistically represent our pluralistic society 2310R 1) h).

When Fat Kid Rules was published in 2003, reviewer Claudia Mills of Children's Literature described K.L. Going as, "one of the most promising voices in YA literature." Since that time, K.L. Going has written three additional YA titles, two of which have also received starred reviews in multiple publications, such as School Library Journal. The subject matter of Fat Kid Rules is contemporary and addresses social concerns of today's teenagers. It realistically represents a piece of the cross-section of teen society and of our clientele. There is no doubt that eating disorders and body image issues are of paramount concern to those who work with teens. As noted, the title in question addresses an underrepresented viewpoint; that of males with body issues. This population is as deserving of representation as its female counterpart. The merits of this title are well established by professionals in the field of YA literature.