

For Immediate Release
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AASL Intellectual Freedom Award recipient announced

Jean Kern, library media specialist at Linden West Elementary School, North Kansas City (N.K.C.) School District in Gladstone, Mo., is the 1993 recipient of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Intellectual Freedom Award.

The award, \$2,000 to the recipient and \$1,000 to the media center of the recipient's choice, donated by Social Issues Resources Series, Inc. (SIRS), is given to a school library media specialist who has upheld the principles of intellectual freedom as set forth by AASL and the American Library Association (ALA).

Kern has designated a rural school in the state of Missouri with a special need as the recipient of the \$1,000. The school will be named this fall.

Kern's stand for the principles of intellectual freedom began in September 1987 when a parent requested removal of the book, "I'm Mad At You," a collection of poems designed to show children how to deal with anger, edited by William Cole, from school library media center, said Vicki Hardesty, chair of the AASL Intellectual Freedom Award Committee.

The parent complained that the book treated violence frivolously and with humor. In October 1987, the book was removed throughout the district by a directive of the elementary education director and placed in a "restricted" area for use by children only with adult supervision or staff.

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"Kern followed district procedure and went public with the incident when no satisfaction could be reached through proper channels," Hardesty added.

In November 1989, the school district adopted a selection policy that is still in place. The policy was first tested in January 1990, when two books were challenged but remained on the shelves without restrictions.

AASL President Ruth Toor appointed Kern, a school library media specialist for the N.K.C. School District for 14 years, to serve a two-year term on the AASL Intellectual Freedom Committee. Kern has decided to submit "I'm Mad At You" to the N.K.C. School District Reconsideration Committee for evaluation.

Kern was nominated for the award by Judy Mahoney, president of the Missouri Association of School Librarians (MASL), one of AASL's 56 affiliated organizations. She received the MASL Intellectual Freedom Award in 1989.

The award will be presented on Monday, June 28, at the AASL Awards Luncheon during the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans.

The 1993 Intellectual Freedom Award Committee included: Hardesty, chair, Findlay, Ohio; Elaine Arciszewski, Morristown, N.J.; Mary Maude McCain, Birmingham, Ala.; Rebecca S. Poole, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Judy C. Roumillat, Charleston, S.C.

AASL is a division of the American Library Association.