Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education Members,

Over the past two years, the New Jersey legislature has passed controversial laws mandating public schools teach lessons that violate or conflict with my family’s beliefs or practices regarding sex, sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, conscience, ethics, morality, and religion.

These laws violate my fundamental and constitutional right to direct the moral and educational upbringing of my children. They were written with no opt-out or other protection for families like mine who have religious and moral objections to the content. Public school lessons should be neutral in their presentation of religious beliefs, worldview, and political ideology. I do not believe anyone should have the right to force their beliefs on someone else, yet this is exactly what is happening through these mandates.

* March 1, 2021 - Assembly bill 4454 was signed into law. Starting in the 2021-2022 school year, public schools are required to teach transgender identity and sexual orientation diversity lessons starting in kindergarten. Schools will now be required to teach a harmful and subjective view of sexual beliefs to 5-year-old children.
* June 3, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education adopted new learning standards for Health Class. Part of these revised standards for 8th grade include *2.1.8.SSH.9: Define vaginal, oral, and anal sex*. Schools will now be required to teach 13-year-old students explicit sexual acts.
* January 31, 2019, Senate bill 1569 was signed into law. Public schools are now required to teach inclusive LGBT themed lessons in multiple subjects in middle and high school. Lesson plans developed for pilot programs far exceed the historical “contributions” mandated by the law.

Schools should ensure students know what kind of conduct is unacceptable, like actions that constitute bullying and harassment. Yet, this does not mean the government has a right to impose a sexual framework onto students. That is clearly within the bounds of moral and social ideology, an area constitutionally reserved to families – not the government – to teach children. Much of the government- imposed morality regarding sexuality and gender identity directly conflicts with the constitutional rights of students; it requires them to acknowledge, affirm, or speak in ways the state defines as “tolerant,” but which are in fact offensive to the deeply held moral and religious convictions of many.

As a concerned parent, I am asking our Board of Education to take a careful and minimal approach to implementing the law’s guidelines regarding this curriculum and respect my request to opt my child out of this material based upon my religious beliefs.

Sincerely,