

## High School Principal Cancels Entire Reading Program To Stop Students From Reading Cory Doctorow's 'Little Brother' | Staff, TechDirt.com

Welcome to the modern equivalent of a book burning. The principal of Booker T Washington High in Pensacola Florida has apparently **cancelled the school's "One School/One Book" summer reading program** all in an effort to block students from reading Cory Doctorow's (absolutely fantastic) book *Little Brother*. It appears he may be against the fact that one of the messages of the book is the importance of "questioning authority," and has decided to show the school what true, obnoxious authoritarianism looks like.

*Little Brother had been selected and approved as the school's summer One School/One Book reading pick, and the school librarian Betsy Woolley had worked with Mary Kate Griffith from the English department to develop an excellent **educational supplement** for the students to use to launch their critical discussions in the fall. The whole project had been signed off on by the school administration and it was ready to go out to the students when the principal intervened and ordered them to change the title.*

*In an email conversation with Ms Griffith, the principal cited reviews that emphasized the book's positive view of questioning authority, lauding "hacker culture", and discussing sex and sexuality in passing. He mentioned that a parent had complained about profanity (there's no profanity in the book, though there's a reference to a swear word). In short, he made it clear that the book was being challenged because of its politics and its content.*

*Ultimately, the entire schoolwide One Book/One School program was cancelled. In an attempt to... er... question that authority, Doctorow and his publisher, Tor, are sending 200 free copies of the book to the school. A school trying to ban books is almost always a stupid idea, but it seems particularly stupid in this day and age with this particular book. In the end, all it is likely to do is cause more people to actually read the book and to, you know, question authority.*