

NOVEL/BOOK-LENGTH WORK (Fiction, Non-Fiction, Drama) PROPOSAL

Proposal Request Information

Prior to filling out this form, please read the [Novel Adoption Proposal Checklist](#) (scroll down to novel section) with pertinent policies regarding novel selection and adoption.

FOR DISTRICT USE ONLY FINAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED APPROVAL GRADE LEVELS:	8th and up
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Section I

To be filled out by requesting educator:

Ia. REQUESTOR AND REVIEW TEAM INFORMATION

School	Castle View High School	
Date	12-18-22	
Requesting Educator Name	Matt Tisser	
Requesting Educator Email	MT,tkisser@dcsdk12.org	
Novel Adoption School Process Manager Name	Jordi Owens	
Novel Adoption School Process Manager Email	jowens1@dcsdk12.org	
Proposal Review Team Member	Reviewer's Name	Contact Information - email
District Coordinator	Tracie King	tking@dcsdk12.org
Colleague	Michael Schneider	Michael.Schneider@dcsdk12.org
Parent #1	Tiffany Martin	Timartin1@dcsdk12.org
Parent #2	Michelle Scheibe	Mscheibe@dcsdk12.org

Ib. BOOK INFORMATION

Title of proposed book	Darius The Great Is Not Okay
Author (s)	Adib Khorram
Publisher	Penguin Books
Edition	N/A

ISBN number	9780525552970
Copyright date	8/28/18
Course and/or subject area in which work will be used	English 1, English 4 (when co-taught with World History)
Grade level(s)	9-12
Lexil Level Score (If you are unsure, please visit https://hub.lexile.com/fina-a-boo k/search)	710
Dates the book information was displayed at the school and posted on the school's website (2 week min.)	2/1-2/14/2023
Date the book was communicated to the School Accountability Committee?	2/1/2023

Ic. NOVEL DESCRIPTION

Please write a brief description of the novel in your own words and how it relates to the content and age group of students using this proposed book.

This novel follows the early teenage years of Darius, an Iranian-American living in Portland Oregon, who, because of a death in the family, goes to visit and spend time with his extended family in Iran. In the US, he is an athlete, a Star Trek nerd, and feels like his only connection to his Iranian heritage is his love of tea. Once in Iran, he discovers that he enjoys learning about Iranian culture, makes friends with a boy his age who has more in common with him than any of his friends in the US, and eventually comes back to the US reinvigorated about his heritage.

It's a great book about a teenager finding his identity both in terms of social groups (he plays soccer, but isn't initially accepted because he isn't a stereotypical jock, etc.), and his heritage. Many English 1 classes do units on identity and for students that feel disconnected geographically and culturally from their heritage, Darius is a great character for them to learn from. In a class co-taught with social studies, specifically a world history class, reading this novel would give students a lens into Iranian culture in a way that shows the modern day effects of things like the Iranian Revolution, but that also reinforces the idea that we shouldn't judge citizens of foreign countries solely by the actions of their governments. This book acknowledges some of the Iranian government's more troubling policies, while humanizing the families that live there in ways that make them full people, not just subjects of a theocracy.

Id. ALIGNMENT WITH DCSD'S CURRICULUM

Please write a detailed description of how the novel aligns to DCSD's Curriculum - Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) and Essential Skills:

(Please cite the specific CAS Grade Level Expectations and if applicable, the Evidence Outcomes (EOs) the novel will help address).

Standard 2.3 of the **Colorado Academic Standards** asks students to “Read a wide variety of literary texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.” To provide literature about the “human experience” means the classroom must present texts from a diverse and broad perspective. One of the underrepresented perspectives is the Native American one. By reading and analyzing *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, students will be able to build background knowledge about this important culture from a historical *and* a modern point of view. Through their analysis of the text, students will also be able to meet the following standards and essential skills:

- Standard 2.1.a.ii: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. (CCSS: RL.11-12.2)
- Standard 2.1.b.ii: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (for example: the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- Standard 2.1.c.i: By the end of 12th grade, analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (for example: recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.
- Colorado Essential Skill 1: Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis. (Entrepreneurial Skills, Critical Thinking/Problem Solving)
- Colorado Essential Skill 3: Analyze both how and why media messages are constructed, and for what purposes and use information accurately, ethically, and creatively for the issue or problem at hand. (Professional Skills, Information Literacy)

Ie. RECOMMENDATIONS

Three recommendations, referrals or reviews must be included. Please use professional reviews (reviews from the School Library Journal, Kirkus, Booklist, Publisher's weekly etc.). The District Library Media Center will be happy to direct you to these sources. List the sources of the reviews below and attach copies of all reviews.

Review #1

School Library Journal:

/ Starred Review */* Gr 8 Up—Darius is a bullied American teenager dealing with numerous stigmas. His mom is Persian and his "Übermensch" dad is white. He is overweight. He takes medication for depression. He is a devotee of artisanal tea, Star Trek (all seasons), and Tolkien. And there is an unspoken awareness that Darius is gay. He is certain that he is a constant disappointment to his father who also takes antidepressants, which they both consider a weakness. When his family travels to Iran to see his mother's parents because his grandfather (Babou) is dying, Darius experiences shifting perceptions about the country, his extended family, and himself. Debut author Khorram presents meticulous descriptions and explanations of food, geography, religion, architecture, and English translations of Farsi for readers unfamiliar with Persian culture through the characters' dialogue and Darius's observations. References to Tolkien, Star Trek, and astronomy minutiae, on the other hand, may be unclear for uninitiated readers. Despite the sometimes overly didactic message about the importance of chronic depression treatment, Darius is a well-crafted, awkward but endearing character, and his cross-cultural story will inspire reflection about identity and belonging. VERDICT A strong choice for YA shelves. Give this to fans for Adam Silvera and John Corey Whaley.—Elaine Fultz, Madison Jr. Sr. High School, Middletown, OH --Elaine Fultz (Reviewed 08/01/2018) (School Library Journal, vol 64, issue 8, p73)

Review #2

Publishers Weekly:

/ Starred Review */* First-time author Khorram's coming-of-age novel brings to life the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of a culture steeped in tradition. After learning that her Iranian father is ailing, high school sophomore Darius's mother decides to take the family to visit her father and relatives in Iran. Suffering from chronic depression and being bullied at school in America, Darius isn't sure how he'll fare in a country he's never seen. It doesn't take him long to adjust as people welcome him with open arms, however, especially after he meets Sohrab, his grandparents'

teenaged neighbor, who invites him to play soccer and quickly becomes Darius 's first real friend ever. While the book doesn't sugarcoat problems in the country (unjust imprisonment and an outdated view of mental illness are mentioned), it mainly stays focused on the positive—Iran's impressive landscape and mouthwatering food, the warmth of its people—as it shows how a boy who feels like an outcast at home finds himself and true friendship overseas. Ages 12–up. Agent: Molly O'Neill, Waxman Leavell. (Aug.) --Staff (Reviewed 06/04/2018) (Publishers Weekly, vol 265, issue 23, p)

Review #3

Kirkus:

/ Starred Review */* Darius Kellner suffers from depression, bullying by high school jocks, and a father who seems to always be disappointed in him. When Darius ' grandfather becomes terminally ill, Darius , along with his parents and younger sister, travels to Iran for the first time in his life. Iranian on his mother's side and white American on his father's side, Darius never quite fits in. He's mocked for his name and nerdy interests at Chapel Hill High School in Portland, Oregon, and doesn't speak enough Farsi to communicate with his Iranian relatives either. When he arrives in Iran, learning to play the Persian card game Rook, socializing, and celebrating Nowruz with a family he had never properly met before is all overwhelming and leaves Darius wondering if he'll ever truly belong anywhere. But all that changes when Darius meets Sohrab, a Baha'i boy, in Yazd. Sohrab teaches Darius what friendship is really about: loyalty, honesty, and someone who has your back in a football (soccer) match. For the first time in a long time, Darius learns to love himself no matter what external forces attempt to squash his confidence. Khorram's debut novel is filled with insight into the lives of teens, weaving together the reality of living with mental illness while also dealing with identity and immigration politics. This tear-jerker will leave readers wanting to follow the next chapter in Darius ' life. (Fiction. 12-adult) (Kirkus Reviews, July 1, 2018)

SECTION II: Review Team Information

Each review team member will complete an individual section for a formal review of the book based on your stakeholder perspective. All members of the site review team **MUST read** the proposed novel/book **prior submission to the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Director.**

IIa. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by requesting educator)

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	This book is about a high school student and describes many aspects of life that these grade levels live with. Examples would be athletics, balancing a job with school, the pressures of being an older sibling, dealing with parent expectations, learning that your parents aren't perfect, the messiness of hormones and relationships, etc.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	Shouldn't need to. It's written as a YA novel. It briefly discusses circumcision as a cultural practice, but is not graphic.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Easy to connect to social studies and other characters that are struggling to fully form their identity, especially when it comes to their heritage.
actively engages students through the text	Y	Book is very engaging
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	Every high school student is a high school student, and Darius, as a character, has varied interests, from nerd culture, to athletics, to history, to having siblings, so many students will be able to form an easy connection.
Is in alignment with Board File ADB on Education Equity , AND contributes to an inclusive culture for all students?	Y	This book brings Iranian culture, an often misunderstood part of the historic and modern human experience, into the classroom in a way that enhances the English curriculum and works toward a curriculum that better includes all voices and experiences. This helps create a more equitable classroom culture and curriculum for our students.
Recommend novel for adoption	X Yes	

	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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IIIb. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by District Coordinator) Tracie King

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	This book is appropriate for students in 8th grade and up, and has the professional reviews necessary.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	The novel is written for young adults and doesn't have alarming content in it.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Mental health is something that many students suffer from themselves or has a family member or friend that suffers from it. The author handled growing up and dealing with normal teenage things along with the mental illness that Darius suffers from really relatable.
actively engages students through the text	Y	The book is really engaging and captures what it's like to grow up and find your identity in addition to being in a family that is made up of two cultures. His dad is a white American and his mom is Persian. Darius struggles to determine where he fits in.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	The book is at a lexel level that most students can access and the book is available in an audio format too.
Is in alignment with Board File ADB on Education Equity , AND contributes to an inclusive culture for all students?	Y	I love that we learn so much about the culture of his mom in this book and that the family travels to Iran to visit family. Learning how other families live or are different from what we do in the US will be a great topic of conversation.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Iic. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by a colleague) Michael Schneider

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	9-12 The characters, language, themes are all applicable for high school students
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	While the 1st person narrator and other characters use frank language, nothing requires parental consent
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Many of the scenes, characters, and language will allow students to access their own circumstances and roles within their communities to understand and empathize with characters in the novel
actively engages students through the text	Y	Being written FOR young adults, the reading level makes the more mature content accessible and engaging for high school readers. The theme of finding identity in particular will engage high school readers to begin to better understand themselves.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	The lexile, narrator with his issues with identity and his ever-changing role in his family, will certainly allow HS students to access and appreciate this novel.
Is in alignment with Board File ADB on Education Equity , AND contributes to an inclusive culture for all students?	Y	Darius represents “othered” members in any community, and we are introduced to different culture, religion, and geography. Stunning, really.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

thanks.

IId. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by Parent #1) Michele Scheibe

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	This book is appropriate for high school students.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	This book is appropriate for young adults, therefore would not see a need for parent permission.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	This book does a great job of exploring the challenges of being a multicultural student living in America and the struggle of finding your identity while at the same time learning about your own cultural background for the first time. It really focuses on Darius' conflict of who he is, who he thinks he should be, and who he wants to be. This could be a relevant connection with every young adult regardless of cultural backgrounds.
actively engages students through the text	Y	I feel this was very engaging from the beginning and I feel like even if you can't relate personally that most students would know somebody that could.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	I feel this could be accessible to a wide range of young adult reading levels.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes-yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Iie. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by Parent #2) Tiffany Martin

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the following grade level(s)	Y	All high school students
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	This book is very appropriate for high school students and would not need parent permission
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	This book will help students relate to students who come from diverse backgrounds. It highlights the struggle to find ones identity when coming from a diverse background.
actively engages students through the text	Y	Yes, students would be engaged from the events in the beginning all the way through the book. The exerperiences of the main character are relatable throughout the book.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	Yes I feel like all levels could read this book.
Recommend novel for adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

SECTION III: Requestor/Educator & District Coordinator Level Process Review

IIIa. Grade Level Recommendations (to be collaborated on between Requesting Educator & District Coordinator based on recommendations made by the review team)

Place initials in the columns indicating level of recommendation. Complete by initialing for every grade level indicated on the chart below. Please include justification if necessary for the level(s) of recommendation below the chart.

Note: If approved by the Board of Education, this novel can be used by all educators in DCSD. Please consider the use of this book for all PK-12 grades, not just the grade or content you teach.

Grade level	Recommended	Recommended: Requires parent notification and consent: The novel/book may contain some mature content and themes	Not Recommended: Content inappropriate for grade level(s)
PK/K			MT,tk,tk
1			MT,tk
2			MT,tk
3			MT,tk
4			MT,tk
5			MT,tk
6			MT,tk
7			MT,tk
8	MT,tk		
9	MT,tk		
10	MT,tk		
11	MT,tk		
12	MT,tk		

IIIb. CIA PROCESS REVIEW

	District Coordinator
Sections I & II are complete.	Y
Building administrator has reviewed the proposal.	Y
The novel was on display at the school for two weeks.	Y
Information about the novel was available on the district's and school's website for two weeks prior to being submitted to the district coordinator.	Y
Information about the novel was shared with the School Advisory Council.	Y

SECTION IV: District Level Process Review

IV. DISTRICT LEVEL REVIEW (to be completed by the Director CIA)

	CIA Director Initials
The novel adoption process has been followed.	EM
The novel was displayed in the school that is making the request.	EM
The novel was displayed on the district website prior to approval.	EM
Notice was provided and the novel was available in the district office for two weeks prior to approval.	EM
Does the District Coordinator and review team support adoption of this book?	EM

Vf.

Does the District Coordinator certify that the information on this form accurately reflects the process followed at the site.	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 21 2023</u> District Coordinator Signature <u>Tracie King</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Vg.

Does the CIA Director support adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Mar 21 2023</u> CIA Director Signature <u>Erica Mason</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION VI: Superintendent's Approval

SUPERINTENDENT'S APPROVAL

Does the Superintendent approve adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date _____ Superintendent Signature _____		

SECTION VII: Board of Education Approval

BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL

Does the Board of Education approve adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date _____ Board of Education Signature _____		

OFFICE USE

	DATE	INITIALS
Approved novel list updated (including recommended grade level)		
Approved form with BOE signatures scanned to CIA folder on District server		

Document Details

Title	Novel Adoption - Darius the Great
File Name	Novel Adoption [Darius The Great Is Not Okay].pdf
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Fingerprint	9a05e4e196b907cf755c925e84d5ff9d
Status	Completed

Document History

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