



BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jessica Dorr

MEMO

TO: Ron Pisaneschi, Board President
FROM: Jessica Dorr, Library Director
CC: Boise Public Library Board of Trustees
DATE: 8/24/2026
RE: Request for Reconsideration – *Princess Pete*.

Overview

On July 27, 2026, Library Staff received a Request for Reconsideration form regarding *Princess Pete* by Zoey Allen and illustrated by Frenci Sanna. This memo provides an overview of the title and its circulation history, an analysis of the title using Boise Public Library's policies, and a recommendation to the Board for consideration in the September meeting.

Background

Princess Pete by Zoey Allen was first published in 2026. After receiving the Request for Reconsideration, staff searched the collection and found that the Boise Public Library owns five copies of the title with a copy at each of our five locations. All copies are in the youth picture book collection. Since the five copies were added to the collection at the end of May, 2026, they have checked out 12 times.

Requestor

The requestor submitted form [5.02a - Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials](#). The requestor indicated that they are a Boise Public Library cardholder, and that they obtained the book from a Boise Public Library. In an attached letter, the requestor indicated that they have children, but they did not indicate that their minor child obtained the book.

Request regarding *Princess Pete*

Staff reviewed *Princess Pete* based on the concerns raised in the Request for Reconsideration form:

- Introducing body confusion
- Adult content and language (drag)
 - My mom is the "queen", and my dad is the "king" and the pretend play in the story introduce children to the adult topic of drag queen

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- In an attached letter, the requestor additionally asked the Library to remove *Princess Pete* and other picture books that “socially affirm” gender fluidity (encouraging body confusion)
- In an attached position statement from the American College of Pediatricians, *Mental Health in Adolescents with Incongruence of Gender Identity and Biological Sex*, the requestor highlighted portions indicating mental health concerns tied to gender fluidity.

Based on staff review, the material meets the following general criteria for materials, regardless of format, outlined in the [Collection Development and Maintenance Policy \(5.01\)](#):

Helps people know more about themselves and their world	meets
Encourages informal self-education	meets
Meets the diverse informational needs and recreational interests of all people in the community	meets
Stimulates thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the country, and the world	meets
Gives access to a variety of opinions on matters of current interest and encourage freedom of expression	meets
Supports educational, civic, and cultural activities within the community;	n/a
Aids in learning and improving job-related skills	n/a
Assists the individual to grow intellectually and enjoy life more fully	meets

Based on staff review, the material meets the following criteria for a work of fiction, regardless of format, outlined in the [The Nature and Quality of Materials Regulation \(5.01c\)](#):

Suitability of physical form for library use	meets
Suitability of subject and style for intended audience	meets
Present and potential relevance to community needs	meets
Appropriateness of medium to content	meets
Insight into human and social condition	meets
Importance as a document of the times	meets
Relation to existing collection and other material on subject	meets
Reputation and/or significance of author	meets
Skill, competence, and purpose of author	meets
Attention of critics, reviewers, and public	meets
Currency	meets
Affordability	meets
Materials created primarily by Artificial Intelligence (AI) without clear human involvement will not be added to the collection due to their lack of coherence, factual accuracy, and quality	n/a
Representation of important movement, genre, trend, or national culture	meets
Vitality and originality	meets



Artistic presentation	meets
Sustained interest	meets
Effective characterization and/or a realistic portrayal of life	meets
Authenticity of historical or social setting	meets
Representation of diverse points of view	meets
Entertaining and imaginative appeal to the general-interest reader	meets

Recommendation

In consideration of the specific concerns raised by the requestor, each point will be addressed individually.

Regarding body confusion, staff acknowledge *Princess Pete* is about a child exploring gender fluidity and not conforming to gender norms. Boise Public Library [Collection Development and Maintenance](#) Policy 5.01 specifically calls out serving the needs of all citizens including gender identity:

This policy is designed to support the Library's mission and service priorities, within budgetary and space limitations, and serve the needs of all citizens of Boise regardless of age, sex, race, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political or social views.

Regarding adult content and language, reviews by professionals (see pages 5 & 6) have been positive and indicate that *Princess Pete* is a picture book written at an age-appropriate level for children.

Regarding the request to remove *Princess Pete* and other picture books that “socially affirm” gender fluidity, staff referred to the [Reconsideration of Materials](#) Policy 5.02:

Only narrowly defined categories of speech are not protected by the First Amendment. For example, obscenity is not protected speech, and neither is “material harmful to minor,” which is a subset of obscenity. If materials do not meet one of the narrowly defined categories of unprotected speech, they are speech protected by the First Amendment.

Regarding the concern that individuals who experience gender fluidity have higher mental health risks, staff recognize that the connection between increased mental health risks and LGBTQIA+ community members has been well-documented in research. How individuals experiencing the increased mental health pressures can find support as well as how their community can support them is not as well-documented. The requestor submitted a position statement from the [American College of Pediatricians](#) -- [Mental Health in Adolescents with Incongruence of Gender Identity and Biological Sex](#). When staff researched the topic, they found a different position statement from the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) – [Ensuring Comprehensive Care and Support for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Children and Adolescents policy statement](#).



Staff recognize that when experts are divided on a topic, it can cause further divisiveness within communities who are looking to experts for answers. In these cases, staff rely even more heavily on library policy, which is based on Constitutional rights and legal precedents, when selecting and reviewing materials for the collection. The Library makes available a variety of viewpoints and does not limit access to information because some find it objectionable.

Staff finds there is no "sexually explicit" content in *Princess Pete*, nor does it meet "material harmful to minors" criteria in the "Children's School and Library Protection Act", which is detailed in the [Written Notice of Complaint Alleging Material Harmful to Minors](#) Exhibit 5.02b.

After careful consideration of the concerns raised by the requestor, staff recommend keeping *Princess Pete* in the youth picture book collection.



Professional Reviews:

School Library Journal (02/01/2026)

K-Gr 3--This adorable story is told by Pete, a happy kid with tan skin and dark hair who lives with his two loving parents, has lots of friends, and loves to play in imaginative ways. Pete doesn't necessarily hold with traditional gender roles: sometimes playing with the boys is fun, and sometimes playing with the girls is, too. Pete wears lots of different kinds of colorful clothes, and there are times when Pete's mom makes a fancy hairdo or paints Pete's nails. Pete was born a boy, but some days he feels like a prince and other days he feels like a princess. Glowing, graphical artwork gives the feeling of the joy of childhood exploration as well as the warmth of acceptance. This is a good book to have for kids who are exploring their own identities or to help children understand those who are. **VERDICT** A solid choice for those needing books about gender identity for young readers.--Debbie Tanner

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School Library Journal 02/01/2026 pg. 38 (EAN 9781536247657, Hardcover)

Kirkus Reviews (02/15/2026):

Sometimes Pete is a prince. Sometimes Pete is a princess. Pete enjoys playing with boys and with girls but doesn't yet have a best friend. Pete likes to play alone, too. Some days Pete wears "pink shorts, yellow tops, and blue rain boots"; other days, Pete sports "green sweaters, flowery pants, and butterfly sandals." Pete loves playing beauty salon with Mom, too. Sometimes Pete dreams about a magical world full of friends flying around on winged, horned horses while hedgehogs sing. Without using specific terms, Allen explores gender identity in a developmentally appropriate way--young children might not have the words to call themselves nonbinary or genderfluid, but, like Pete, they could very well say, "I may have been born a boy, but I don't always feel like the boys. Sometimes I feel more like the girls. Sometimes I feel somewhere in between." Allen's narration is authentically childlike, pairing well with Sanna's illustrations, which heavily incorporate geometric shapes and trans flag colors. On one spread, people who are confused by Pete's gender point fingers at the youngster; Pete is depicted as literally being boxed in by a rectangle and triangle, then attempting to burst out of an oval. Mom has brown skin and curly black hair, while Dad has pale skin and brown hair. Pete has light brown skin, round pink glasses, and short brown hair often in pigtails. Affirming and fun.(Picture book. 3-7) COPYRIGHT(2026) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

- Kirkus Reviews 02/15/2026 (EAN 9781536247657, Hardcover)

Bulletin of Ctr for Child Bks (04/01/2026):

The first-person narrator of this picture book is imaginative young Pete, who makes everyday life a royally good time. With a queen for a mom who loves to play beauty salon with Pete and a king for a dad who helps Pete get dressed every day, offering a plethora of colors and patterns to choose from, Pete is a prince-or, on some days, maybe a princess. Flying out the door on a pink skateboard, Pete heads out to play and revel in getting muddy. Pete has a lot of friends, both boys and girls; they play sports, make music, throw sticks, and dress up in different costumes and clothes. Sometimes Pete plays on their own, their imagining of winged unicorns ("pegacorns")



coming to life. Some people are confused by the way Pete is: are they a boy, or a girl? But queen mom and king dad step in to declare that Pete is Pete, and Pete knows that "sometimes I feel a bit like you. But mostly, I just feel like me." Allen and Sanna's storytelling is straightforward, providing an introduction to gender identity and fluidity and encouraging a gentle deconstruction of gendered stereotypes, made approachable through the voice of childhood wonder. The digital illustrations are bright and bold, with eye-catching patterns and notable inclusivity of trans and LGBTQ+ banners and color schemes throughout. Pete is drawn endearingly, with whimsical hair clips and bows adorning their short, fluffy brown hair, and round pink glasses pair with rainbow-colored nails to match Pete's colorful personality. An entourage of imaginative animals follows close behind them-including dragons, unicorns, a hedgehog, a wiener dog, and even a brachiosaurus with a toilet paper roll stuck around its neck. This story is more than just a celebration of gender identity; it is a celebration of living authentically. GR COPYRIGHT(2026) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

- *Bulletin of Ctr for Child Bks* 04/01/2026 (EAN 9781536247657, Hardcover)

Booklist (05/01/2026):

Preschool-Grade 2 **Starred Review** Among a cheerful kaleidoscope of colors in a pastel palette, readers meet Pete, a child proud of their identity and how they present to others. Pete's parents are supportive of however Pete wishes to dress and play, starring in make-believe with the child sometimes as a prince, sometimes as a princess. Most inspiring is Pete's belief in and love for themselves, which is boosted by the support of those around them. But even in the face of judgment from unsupportive people, Pete doesn't waver in the commitment to be, well, Pete! Perfect for any member of the LGBTQ+ spectrum as well as young allies who would like to learn more about their LGBTQ+ friends and classmates, Allen's book centers trans and queer joy, self-love, and uniqueness. The author's message is complemented by the vibrant, energetic illustrations by Sanna that evoke happiness and comfort. The playful nature of this book reminds young audiences that, no matter how someone identifies, young people can find a lot in common that they enjoy and trans kids deserve a warm welcome, too. COPYRIGHT(2026) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

- *Booklist* 05/01/2026 (EAN 9781536247657, Hardcover) - **Starred Review*

