

# The Sunshine Resistance

## *Florida Activists You Should Know*

Florida's resistance is not a rumor. Across the state, activists, educators, parents, librarians, lawyers, and ordinary citizens are fighting back every day. These are some of the people and organizations leading the charge.

### **Stephana Ferrell — Florida Freedom to Read Project**

Co-founder of FFTRP, Ferrell has become one of the most prominent voices against book banning in Florida. Her organization tracks every book challenge in every Florida district and publishes the data publicly. When officials claim 'no books are banned in Florida,' Ferrell has the receipts — thousands of them.

### **Moms for Liberty Opposition: Moms for Liberty Accountability Project**

As Moms for Liberty chapters pushed book bans across Florida school boards, a counter-movement organized to expose their tactics, track their funding, and run candidates against them in school board races. In 2023, Moms for Liberty-backed candidates lost school board races across Florida.

### **PEN America**

The writers' advocacy organization brought the first major federal lawsuit against Florida's book ban regime, suing Escambia County School Board alongside Penguin Random House. Their Florida data — tracking every banned book, every district — is the primary source journalists and policymakers use to document the scope of the censorship.

### **Florida Education Association**

The state's largest teachers' union has fought HB 1069 and related laws in court and organized teachers facing investigation for classroom content. When the state threatened teachers with license revocation for their book choices, FEA stood in the gap.

### **Local School Board Resistance Candidates**

In Alachua, Broward, Orange, and Hillsborough counties, resistance-aligned school board members have been elected on explicit platforms opposing book bans and defending comprehensive education. These races are won by hundreds — sometimes dozens — of votes.

### **The Librarians**

Unnamed, often unrecognized, Florida's school and public librarians have been on the front lines. Some have retired rather than remove books. Some have quietly resisted. Some have spoken at

school board meetings at personal professional risk. They are the last line of defense between a child and a banned book.

## Florida Rising

Progressive organizing collective building political power in Florida's communities of color. Their voter registration and civic engagement work has been targeted by new Florida third-party voter registration restrictions — and they're fighting those restrictions in court.

## How to Get Involved

- Attend your school board meeting. Find your district's schedule at your county school board website.
- Follow the Florida Freedom to Read Project for weekly updates on book challenges.
- Donate to PEN America's legal defense fund for Florida cases.
- Run for school board. These elections are decided by small margins.
- Support candidates who explicitly oppose book bans with your time, money, and vote.