

**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	Rock Canyon High School	
Date	8/3/23	
Requesting Educator Name	Karen Whitney	
Requesting Educator Email	kwhitney@dcsdk12.org	
Novel Adoption School Process Manager Name	Jason Parker	
Novel Adoption School Process Manager Email	japarker@dcsdk12.org	
<b>Proposal Review Team Member</b>	<b>Reviewer's Name</b>	<b>Contact Information - email</b>
District Coordinator	Tracie King	tking@dcsdk12.org
Colleague	Kristin Greenleaf	kgreenleaf@dcsdk12.org
Parent #1	Mike Heene	mheene@adpay.com
Parent #2	Melanie Christensen	mgmchristensen@gmail.com

**Ib. BOOK INFORMATION**

Title of proposed book	Salt to the Sea
Author (s)	Ruta Sepetys
Publisher	Philomel Books
Edition	Paperback, First Edition (August 1, 2017)

ISBN number	<b>ISBN-10</b> : 0142423629 <b>ISBN-13</b> : 978-0142423622
Copyright date	August 1, 2017
Course and/or subject area in which work will be used	10th grade English II
Grade level(s)	8-12
Lexile Level Score (If you are unsure, please visit <a href="https://hub.lexile.com/fina-a-book/search">https://hub.lexile.com/fina-a-book/search</a> )	HL560L
Dates the book information was displayed at the school and posted on the school's website (2 week min.)	August 8th, 2023
Date the book was communicated to the School Accountability Committee?	August 11th, 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.

*Salt to the Sea* is the story of 4 refugee passengers escaping violence on the ship *Wilhelm Gustloff* during WWII. The text shifts between narrators telling each character's story throughout the text. This is historical fiction about a story that most have never heard of. While the characters are fictional, the ship and events surrounding the characters are historically accurate. As they flee their homes in search of freedom and safety, we learn not only their stories, but come to understand that thousands of others much like them whose stories will never be told, also risked and/or lost their lives to escape the horrors of war.

**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).*

*Reading: 4. Read a wide range of informational texts to build knowledge and to better understand the human experience.*

2. Interpret and evaluate complex informational texts using various critical reading strategies.  
5. Understand how language functions in different contexts, command a variety of word-learning strategies to assist comprehension, and make effective choices for meaning or style when writing and speaking.

Writing: 1. Write thoughtful, well-developed arguments that support knowledgeable and significant claims, anticipating and addressing the audience's values and biases.

### 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

*Booklist starred (December 1, 2015 (Vol. 112, No. 7))*

Grades 9-12. Shipwrecks and maritime disasters are of fathomless fascination, with ships such as the Titanic and the Lusitania household names. It's interesting that the sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff during WWII, which led to the largest loss of life on a single ship in history, goes largely unremarked upon—at least in America. The numbers are staggering: far over capacity, the ship was carrying approximately 10,582 passengers when it was struck by Soviet torpedoes, and more than 9,400 of those passengers perished in the ensuing wreck, a death toll that dwarfs the Titanic's assumed losses (around 1,500). Part of the neglect might be due to timing. The ship was evacuating refugees and German citizens from Gotenhafen, Poland, when it was sunk in the Baltic Sea in the winter of 1945. Astounding losses defined WWII, and this became yet another tragedy buried under the other tragedies—after all, even 9,400 is dwarfed by 60 million. But it was a tragedy, and, like all tragedies, it broke the people involved down to their barest parts. Sepetys has resurrected the story through the eyes of four young characters trying to reach safety as the Russian army advances: Joana, a Lithuanian nurse; Emilia, a pregnant Polish 15-year-old; Florian, a Prussian artist carrying dangerous cargo; and Alfred, a German naval soldier stationed on the Wilhelm Gustloff. Each has been touched by war and is hunted by the past, and, determined to get on a boat in any way possible, hurtling unknowingly toward disaster. With exquisite prose, Sepetys plumbs the depths of her quartet of characters, bringing each to the breaking point and back, shaping a narrative that is as much about the intricacies of human nature as it is about a historical catastrophe. Nominated for the Morris Award for her first novel, *Between Shades of Gray* (2011), Sepetys returns to those roots with another harrowing, impeccably researched story of hardship and survival in Eastern Europe. When reading a book so likely to end in tears, one inclination is to avoid getting attached to any of the characters, but that's next to impossible here, so thoroughly does Sepetys mine their inner landscapes. That doesn't mean they are all likable—as it breeds heroes, so, too, does calamity breed cowards and opportunists—but it does make it difficult to think of them as anything other than real people. After all, the ship was very real. It does the people aboard a disservice not to reflect them the best one can. In many ways, the greatest punishment—and the greatest of all tragedies—is to be forgotten. This haunting gem of a novel begs to be remembered, and in turn, it tries to remember the thousands of real people its fictional characters represent. What it asks of us is that their memories—and their stories—not be abandoned to the sea.

## Review #2

*School Library Journal (December 1, 2016)*

Gr 8 Up-In East Prussia at the end of World War II, a group of refugees are desperately making their way toward the one chance they have at survival: passage aboard the Wilhelm Gustloff. Braving the unforgiving elements, violent soldiers, and an uncertain future, Joana, Emilia, and Florian narrate their harrowing journey, along with unsettling chapters from Alfred, a Nazi sailor. Sepetys brings to vivid life the events and repercussions of this little-known piece of 20th-century history. © Copyright 2016. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc.

## Review #3

*School Library Journal (December 1, 2015)*

Gr 8 Up-With the same lyrical prose, eye for detail, and breath-stopping ability to unfold delicate layers of characterization and theme with skillfully paced revelations, the author of *Between Shades of Gray* (2011) and *Out of the Easy* (2013, both Philomel) presents a fictionalized World War II story based on a true tragedy. In alternating narratives, four different teens grapple with the bitter cold, the ever-present danger of falling bombs, and their own dark secrets. There's Joana, a pretty and empathetic Lithuanian nurse who harbors a heavy guilt; Florian, a mysterious young man struggling to hide his true identity; Amelia, a pregnant Polish girl; and Alfred, a sociopathic Nazi sailor with an inferiority complex. Along with a fully realized cast of secondary characters who comprise the small band of refugees slowly making their way through the frozen and battle-scarred Prussian countryside, Joana, Florian, and Amelia are determined to get aboard the Wilhelm Gustloff, a German military ship evacuating civilians and wounded soldiers at the tail end of the war. Alfred, meanwhile, a low-ranking officer stationed aboard the ship, avoids work by hiding in the toilets, composing imaginary and boastful letters to a girl back home. Each voice is distinct, and Sepetys unwinds their individual backstories slowly and with care. As the relationships among the refugees strengthen and they begin to trust one another, vulnerabilities are revealed-some of them life-threatening. Observations of war and loss, human cruelty, and hatred are unflinching. But through the horror and heartbreak shine rays of hope: love, kindness, courage, and sacrifice. VERDICT Artfully told and sensitively crafted, Sepetys's exploration of this little-known piece of history will leave readers weeping.-Kiera Parrott, *School Library Journal* © Copyright 2015. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

**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 <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s) 7-12	Y	8-12 Appropriate for middle/high school students. I plan to use it in my English II and AP Language and Composition classes.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	No parent permission necessary. While there is some violence, it is accurately describing violences associated with the war.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	It is a coming of age story for the characters as well as a historical description of WWII and the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> . Students can make connections with their own experiences growing up and learn about and make connections to the historical/cultural information.
actively engages students through the text	Y	Extremely engaging. Sepetys is a vidi storyteller and engages with emotion, life lessons and historically accurate information that readers can relate to.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	The reading is accessible to all students. Some challenging vocabulary and topics, but explained in a way that students can access easily.
Is in alignment with <a href="#">Board File ADB on Education Equity</a> , AND contributes to an inclusive culture for all students?	Y	Provides opportunity to learn about diverse perspectives and historical contexts and develop critical thinking skills while evaluating the choices and experiences of the characters.
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

**IIb. 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 <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	The book is appropriate for students in 8th grade and up which is supported by professional reviews.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	The novel is narrated from different points of view of refugees of World War II trying to find their way and find a new home as the war is coming to an end and they do not have a home to go back to. I believe the premise of the book will help foster rich conversations among students.
actively engages students through the text	Y	Highly engaging story and will interest most students.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	The book is in several formats so all students should be able to access it.
Is in alignment with <a href="#">Board File ADB on Education Equity</a> , AND contributes to an inclusive culture for all students?	Y	
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

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

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	The characters range in age common with our high school students.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	There is no questionable content in this novel
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	This is a unique perspective of a famous shipwreck during WWII that often goes untalked about
actively engages students through the text	Y	Students are often in awe of this event and the story that takes place
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	
Is in alignment with <a href="#">Board File ADB on Education Equity</a> , AND contributes to an inclusive culture for all students?	Y	
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

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

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s)	Y	Appropriate for students in these grades.
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	Not necessary
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	Students can make connections to historical events they already know (WWII) and learn about this one.
actively engages students through the text	Y	The narration from the point of view of a variety of characters holds student interest.
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	The language is accessible and historical knowledge can be discussed in classes.
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes X <input type="checkbox"/> No	



**IIe. EVALUATION of Book (to be completed by Parent #2)**

The proposed novel...	Y/N	Examples/Justification Please be specific and give examples when applicable
is appropriate for the <a href="#">following</a> grade level(s) 8-12	Y	Yes. The author is considered a “crossover” novelist for students and adults
requires parent permission for students to read the book?	N	My daughter read this book in 8th grade and others by this author. I think it is age appropriate.
allows students to create meaning and make relevant connections to other knowledge and experience	Y	This book talks about relationships, survival, and families, helping others, putting others before yourself.
actively engages students through the text	Y	I couldn't put the book down. I wanted to know what happened to each character and was blown away that I did not know that this ship sank and it was bigger than the Titanic and more people died. I kept asking myself how does the world not know this?
Gives an opportunity for all students to access	Y	
<b>Recommend novel for adoption</b>	<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			KW,tk
1			KW,tk
2			KW,tk
3			KW,tk
4			KW,tk
5			KW,tk
6			KW,tk
7			KW,tk
8	KW,tk		
9	KW,tk		
10	KW,tk		
11	KW,tk		
12	KW,tk		

**SECTION V: Signatures/Approvals**

**Va.**

Does the evaluating <i>Educator</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 10 2023</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluating Educator Signature <u>Karen Whitney</u>		

**Vb.**

Does the evaluating <i>Colleague</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 10 2023</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluating Colleague Signature <u>Kristin Greenleaf</u>		

**Vc.**

Does the evaluating <i>Parent #1</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 10 2023</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluating Parent (#1) Signature <u>Mike Heene</u>		

**Vd.**

Does the evaluating <i>Parent (#2)</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 10 2023</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluating Parent (#2) Signature <u>Melanie Christensen</u>		

**Ve.**

Does the evaluating educator's <i>Administrator</i> recommend adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 11 2023</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrator Signature <u>Jeff Seary</u>		

**Vf.**

Does the <b><i>District Coordinator</i></b> certify that the information on this form accurately reflects the process followed at the site.	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 11 2023</u> District Coordinator Signature <u>Tracie King</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Vg.**

Does the <b><i>Director of Library Programming</i></b> support adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 11 2023</u> Director of Library Programming Signature <u>Tracie King</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Vh.**

Does the <b><i>DCSD Cabinet Member</i></b> support adoption of this book?	YES	NO
Date <u>Oct 11 2023</u> DCSD Cabinet Member Signature <u>Matt Reynolds</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>