Battle over Pro-Gay Curriculum Heats Up

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June 8, 2005
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A federal judge in Montgomery County, Maryland, has issued a temporary restraining order to stop the teaching of a sex-education course because it violates the First Amendment. I can't remember any other case in the last 30 years in which a judge sided with parents against a curriculum adopted by a school board.

This sex-education curriculum was scheduled to be taught in three high schools and three middle schools despite parental protests and petitions with 4,000 signatures. After the court decision, the board voted 7-1 to scrap the curriculum (at least for the coming school year) and dissolve the advisory committee that recommended it.

Judge Alexander Williams Jr.'s decision found that the curriculum "presents only one view on the subject — that homosexuality is a natural and morally correct lifestyle — to the exclusion of other perspectives." This "one-sided information," he said, threatens parents' and children's First Amendment rights.

A seven-minute video designed for 10th?graders shows a girl putting a condom on a cucumber. However, as is typical with many sex-ed courses, much of the objectionable material is in the teachers' guide, which the schools had tried to conceal from parents.

This sex-ed curriculum teaches children that "morality is a more subjective issue" and that people can "form a variety of [sexual] relationships lasting from one night to many years." The curriculum calls it a myth that homosexuality is a sin, asserting that the Bible contains only six passages that condemn homosexual behavior, but numerous passages condemning heterosexual behavior.

The ruling in favor of parents and against the school stated that the curriculum would cause "irreparable harm" to the students because of "restrictions to their First Amendment liberties." The judge wrote that "The public interest is served by preventing ... public school [officials] from disseminating one?sided information on a controversial topic."

It's hard to believe, but this offensive curriculum criticizes "fundamentalists" and specifically singles out the Baptists as "theologically flawed" and as "unenlightened and Biblically misguided." The curriculum indicates preference for five other named churches that, "fortunately," are not homophobic and are more friendly towards the homosexual lifestyle.

The Baptists are responding to the challenge. The Montgomery County curriculum is not an isolated instance but is part of a widespread effort in the public schools to teach children that homosexuality is a normal and okay lifestyle.

At the 2005 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), scheduled to take place in Nashville June 21-22, two highly respected Baptists, Dr. Voddie Baucham and Bruce N. Shortt, will present a resolution that lays out the problem and the response. The resolution encourages every SBC church to investigate whether its local school district has a homosexual curriculum or club or program that attempts to influence children to treat homosexual behavior as an acceptable lifestyle.

If the school district has any of these, the resolution urges churches to inform parents and encourage them to remove their children from the public school immediately.

The resolution cautions parents to be aware that these homosexual courses and programs are concealed behind stealth phrases such as tolerance, diversity, multiculturalism, anti-bullying, and safe-sex. The resolution warns against the attempt to hijack the language of the civil rights movement.

The resolution commends Christians working in public schools, asks Baptists to make a greater effort to provide and support Christian education alternatives to public schools, and calls on Baptists to pray for homosexuals.

The SBC resolution correctly identifies the National Education Association as an ally of the campaign to use the public schools to promote acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle. Every year for at least a decade, the annual NEA convention has passed about a dozen resolutions urging implementation of the gay rights agenda in curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and employment regulations.

NEA convention resolutions repeatedly demand that the schools be permitted to determine (without parental approval) what is taught in sex-ed programs. The NEA resolutions demand that school programs include information on "diversity of sexual orientation and/or gender identification."

Several Christian-oriented public interest law firms are helping to confirm parental rights. In addition to Liberty Counsel of Orlando, the firm that won the Montgomery County lawsuit, the Pacific Justice Institute has been helping parents of high school students in Santa Cruz County, California.

Parents there are complaining to school officials about open advocacy of homosexuality by lesbian teachers. Some teachers hang pro-homosexual posters in their classrooms, discuss their lesbian lifestyle in class, and refer students to gay, lesbian and bisexual organizations, while not allowing posters celebrating traditional families.