

Lawsuit Alleges Parents Not Told of Their Right to Skip Common Core Testing

A new lawsuit is alleging that school district officials in Southern California broke the law by not telling parents about their rights to decline involvement in the controversial Common Core testing.

The Pacific Justice Institute, a non-profit legal organization dedicated to religious liberty and parental rights, filed a lawsuit last Monday in Los Angeles Superior Court on behalf of Concerned Parents of California. The defendant in this case is Walnut Valley Unified School District, though a ruling in the case could affect many other districts, as well. The lawsuit states that WVUSD did not comply with state law and regulations requiring them to inform parents of the right to decline participation by their children in statewide assessments.

“Just like everyone else, school districts must follow the law,” noted PJI attorney Michael Pepper, who is the lead attorney in this case. “They may not agree with it, but they cannot ignore it. The statutes and regulations in this area are clear and unambiguous.”

“The district doesn’t get to pick and choose which rules it will follow,” he said

The troubled introduction of the recently-adopted Common Core State Standards into the classroom continued this month with the disclosure that just 44 percent of California students met the standards in English, and only 33 percent in math. The statistics were even worse in Los Angeles County, according to a report in the *Los Angeles Times*.

“As we’ve just been reminded, the implementation of Common Core continues to be a disaster, and many parents want no part of it,” said PJI President Brad Dacus. “Parents have the right and responsibility to do what is in their children’s best interests, and California school districts have the legal obligation to make sure parents know their options.”

PJI previously confronted Calabasas High School after the principal threatened retaliation against students whose parents opted them out of Common Core testing. The principal reversed course after receiving a demand letter from PJI which prompted inquiries from Fox News.

The issue of Common Core – the controversial, top-down federal educational guidelines that many parents find unacceptable and needlessly complex – has become part of the 2016 presidential race. Former Gov. Jeb Bush, as well as current Gov. John Kasich, continue to defend Common Core, despite its lack of popularity.