

Sexually Explicit Content Pushed on Public Schools



Maria Rivera, 4, works on a computer with other classmates at a pre-kindergarten class in Dallas. (AP Images/LM Otero)

Even as the triple-X domain is gaining momentum for pornographers, there's a new battle in the public school system over Internet access to sexually explicit materials.

It seems the American Civil Liberties Union is demanding that seven public school districts deactivate web filters that block student access to websites with sexually-inappropriate content because the filters also block sites homosexual activist groups run.

The Alliance Defense Fund has sent letters to the districts urging them to reject the ACLU's demands. In the letter, ADF assures the districts that they are well within their legal rights to retain their filters. The letters also provide the districts with a list of sites that display pornographic images and sexual advice that would be accessible to students if the districts give in to the ACLU's demands.

ADF sent a similar letter to Gwinnett County Public Schools in Georgia earlier this month after the ACLU threatened that district over its web filter as part of the ACLU's "Don't Filter Me Initiative."

"School districts shouldn't be bullied into exposing students to sexually explicit materials," says ADF Senior Counsel David Cortman. "The 'Don't Filter Me Initiative' would be better named the 'Public School Porn Initiative.' That's because the ACLU is pushing its radical sexual agenda for children by intimidating school districts with a long string of scare

tactics disguised as a concern over censorship. In truth, these school districts have no obligation to cave to the ACLU's unwarranted demands. Our children come first."

The ACLU is threatening the seven districts and has already sued one of them in Missouri. The ACLU claims that not allowing children to access sites currently blocked by certain web filters violates the students' constitutionally protected rights and the federal Equal Access Act.

The targeted school districts are Camdenton R-III School District (Mo.), Hurst-Euless-Bedford Independent School District (Texas), Oroville Union High School District (Calif.), Little Rock School District (Ark.), Prince William County Public Schools (Va.), Vineland Public School District (N.J.), and Aldine Independent School District (Texas).

The ADF letters explain that districts have broad authority over what materials students may access on the Internet. ADF also explains that the ACLU's demands could result in the districts violating state laws that prohibit distributing harmful sexual materials to minors.

"The materials that the ACLU wants children exposed to is sexually explicit enough that just mentioning them in an email to adult district officials triggers an 'offensive content' filter," says ADF Legal Counsel Jeremy Tedesco. "The ACLU cannot mask its attempts to turn school computers into porn portals for children with a supposed concern for censorship. Parents expect schools to be places where their children learn—not places where they access pornography."