

Atheists Lose Battle to Silence Christmas Festival

Alliance Defending Freedom sent Kalispell and Whitefish Public Schools in Montana a letter commending the school districts for rejecting two secularist groups' attempts to stop student choir members from voluntarily participating in a community Christmas festival held at a local church.

"Schools should not have to think twice about whether they can allow choirs to participate in community Christmas events," says litigation staff counsel Rory Gray. "Courts have unanimously allowed students to sing Christmas carols at school. Nothing changes when they sing the same Christmas songs at a community festival instead. We commend the districts for rightly ignoring the baseless threats delivered by the American Civil Liberties Union and the Freedom From Religion Foundation."

The Alliance Defending Freedom letter explains that "every federal court to examine the issue has determined that including Christmas carols in school choir performances fully complies with the First Amendment."

These performances at a church or elsewhere do not promote religion but allow students "to serve the wider community with their talents, see and learn from other choirs' techniques, and gain valuable performance experience in front of a large audience."

The letter also emphasizes that Alliance Defending Freedom is ready to freely assist public schools if the ACLU and the Freedom From Religion Foundation take legal action and continue their "unfounded demands that school choirs be excluded from the community Christmas festival."

"A handful of misguided complaints and a misunderstanding of

First Amendment law should not be allowed to harm students and deprive them of educational experiences that serve the community,” adds senior legal counsel Jeremy Tedesco. “We hope other school districts will follow Kalispell and Whitefish’s example and reject the religious discrimination these groups promote.”