

Are Your 8-Year-Olds Invited to a Secret LGBTQ Club?

Parents at a California elementary school are enraged after finding out that teachers created a secret LGBTQ club that children as young as eight could attend without their permission.

Pleasant Grove Elementary School in Elk Grove, CA is finding itself in hot water after parents discovered in January that a third-grade teacher was allowed to personally invite third-through sixth-grade students to an LGBTQ club he was starting.

The “UBU Club” was described as a club for “boys who crush on boys” and “girls who crush on girls,” but was supposed to be kept secret.

That is until the son of Mary Congdon, a fourth grader, came home confused about his gender identity after hearing third-grade teacher Daniel Bishop talk about same-sex attraction, the California Research Council reports.

“I immediately reached out to his teacher bewildered why we the parents had no recollection of hearing about this new club,” Congdon recalled. “Her response was that it was because ‘it’s a safe place for students to go and discuss their sexuality without having to come out to their parents.’”

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Congdon, like other parents, was furious.

“I’m not sure when Mr. Bishop began paying for my son’s clothes, housing, meals; when has he taken my son to his doctor’s appointments, sports games, church or tucked my son in at night,” she said. “He is not the parent. I reminded my

son and his younger second-grade brother that night. We are your safe place. We are your parents. Bullying is inappropriate no matter the reasons, and should be handled and dealt with by your school principal.”

Congdon reached out to the school’s principal to ask why permission slips were not sent home.

According to Congdon, Principal Deidra Wood responded that they feared parents would say no. She also notified Congdon via email that LGBTQ clubs had already been started in five to 10 other elementary schools.

Principal Wood told CBS News, “Our legal counsel has been weighing in with our district cabinet because of the laws and because whatever decisions are made will impact not only our school and club but the other five to 10 elementary similar clubs.”

The Elk Grove Unified School District also told the outlet the “club is currently on pause while the District reviews all pertinent policies and practices that relate to before/after school clubs.”

But it is of little relief to parents.

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“Don’t keep secrets from parents,” said Brittani Cortina who has two children at Pleasant Grove Elementary, one in second grade and the other in fourth. “Take that issue with the parents. Don’t take that issue with the students in the school.”

“Permission slips are required for the gardening club, so why not for this club?” questioned another parent, Heidi Moore.

“Pleasant Grove Elementary School staff betrayed the trust of

parents when they held this UBU club during lunch time and did not notify parents or require permission slips for the club," she added.

"It's also alarming that the district has ignored concerned parents for weeks, but recently sent a flier to all district teachers, inviting them to a training on how to respond to resistance from parents against LGBTQ Clubs," Moore continued.

"The only response the district did give parents was that their legal counsel was weighing in on the situation. It seems like that is something they should have done before implementing this secret lunchtime club," she explained.

At a Mar. 5 school board meeting, parents showed up demanding answers.

"These parents believe they have a fundamental, constitutional right to direct the care, education and upbringing of their children," said Greg Burt, parent of an Elk Grove Elementary student. "They also believe the school district is obligated to respect that right. That's why schools should never keep secrets from parents."

Burt, who is also the Vice President of the California Family Council, explained that what happened at Pleasant Grove Elementary is not an isolated event.

The California Teachers Association has been putting on seminars for teachers for several years showing them how to start LGBTQ clubs and invite kids without letting their parents know, the CFC reports.{eo}

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