

Oklahoma Fires Back at Atheist Group Targeting Prayer in Schools

The Oklahoma State Department of Education has filed a lawsuit against an atheist legal group seeking to stop a school district's voluntary prayer policy.

"[W]hen Achille Public Schools ('APS') administrators exercised their statutorily required duties to allow students to participate in voluntary prayer, the Foundation for Freedom from Religion ('FFRF') threatened the district with demands that APS administration must forbid its students from exercising their statutory and constitutional rights or face legal consequences," the filing says.

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"Furthermore, despite the incontrovertible fact that no student was forced to participate in prayer or any other religious activities, the FFRF insisted that '[t]he district must cease permitting teachers to give students bible lessons and it must ensure its schools refrain from coercing student to observe and participate in school-sponsored prayer,'" the lawsuit notes, referencing a cease-and-desist letter sent by the organization.

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The lawsuit asserted that FFRF's actions are "clearly not about any concern for separation of church and state. In reality, their actions are nothing more than the very prejudice, hatred, and bigotry they pretend to despise hidden behind a thinly woven cloak of constitutional championship."

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“Oklahoma will never be bullied by radical, out-of-state atheists who use intimidation and harassment against kids,” State Superintendent Ryan Walters said, as per KOCO News 5. “The Freedom From Religion Foundation has no stake in our schools, no authority over our communities, and absolutely no right to trample on the First Amendment. Their threats are nothing more than a desperate attempt to erase faith from public life, and we will fight them at every turn.”

This article originally appeared on American Faith, and is reposted with permission.

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