

# Oregon Educator Sues Over Removal of Christian-Themed Books from Office

An Oregon educator has filed a federal lawsuit against the InterMountain Education Service District, alleging that his constitutional rights were violated when he was ordered to remove Christian-themed children's books from his office.

The case underscores ongoing tensions between religious expression and institutional policies in public education settings.

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Roderick Theis, a licensed clinical social worker and education specialist with IMESD since 2008, displayed three books in his offices at La Grande Middle School and Elgin School District: *He Is He, She Is She*, and *Johnny the Walrus*. Theis stated that these books reflect his Christian beliefs about gender and were intended to inspire children to embrace their God-given identities.

In Oct. 2024, a staff member filed a complaint, labeling the books as "transphobic." Subsequently, IMESD officials instructed Theis to remove the books, deeming them a "hostile expression of animus" toward individuals based on gender identity. Theis was warned that failure to comply could result in disciplinary action, including termination.

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The lawsuit, filed with the assistance of Alliance Defending Freedom, argues that IMESD's actions constitute viewpoint discrimination. Theis contends that while his expression of Christian beliefs was censored, other employees were permitted to display materials supporting various ideological perspectives, including LGBTQ+ themes and political messages.

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Alliance Defending Freedom Senior Counsel Tyson Langhofer stated, "Government officials are wrong to tell me I can't express my sincere religious beliefs about male and female. Every American, including my co-workers, has the same freedom to express their own views on the subject."

Theis seeks damages and a court order allowing him to display the books, asserting that IMESD's policies infringe upon his First and Fourteenth Amendment rights. The case highlights the broader debate over religious freedom and free speech within public institutions.

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