

School Bullies Student for Supporting Biblical Family View

School officials at Shawano High School in Shawano, Wis., censored and punished 15-year-old Brandon Wegner for writing an op-ed article explaining the **biblical view** of homosexuality and supporting natural mother-father adoption.

Wegner quoted several verses from the Bible regarding homosexuality. After he wrote this article he was pulled into hours of meetings with school administrators and staff, without his parents' knowledge. This caused him to miss exam preparation classes and at least one exam. Wegner was hauled before the superintendent on charges that he had violated the school's bullying policy.

Superintendent Todd Carlson told him that the column "went against the **bullying policy**," and asked him if he "regretted" writing it. When Wegner stated that he did not regret writing it, and that he stood behind his beliefs, Carlson told him that he "had got to be one of the most ignorant kids to try to argue with him about this topic," that "we have the power to suspend you if we want to" and that the column had "personally offended me, so I know you offended other people!"

Wegner's opinion was a part of an editorial page that presented viewpoints both for and against homosexual adoption, each articulated by students. After the school newspaper was published in the local town paper, a homosexual in the community complained to the school. School officials then censored Wegner's article, forcing him and his classmates to pull the page out of the newspaper before distribution at the school.

Liberty Counsel sent a letter to the school demanding it

apologize for its **unconstitutional** and **irrational censorship** and humiliation of Wegner. In a statement, the school “sincerely apologized”—not for allowing the topic to begin with, but only for the biblical viewpoint Wegner presented. The First Amendment protects the opinions of all, including student journalists.

“The bullying at Shawano High School is by Superintendent Todd Carlson and the school officials, not the student, Brandon Wegner,” Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel. “The school officials have displayed **blatant intolerance** of a view on homosexuality held by many people. The school’s actions are shocking and unjustified. The superintendent should immediately apologize and stop the bullying.”