

Should an Image of Jesus Christ Bearing Sin's Tattoos be Allowed in Schools?

In October of last year, Lubbock Independent School District denied the ad request from David L. Miller, founder of Little Pencil, LLC, an organization that promotes the Bible's teachings through contemporary marketing campaigns.

The ad consists of the website address "" and an image of Jesus Christ wearing tattoos that represent the sins he bore on the cross. The site features an allegorical video that shows struggling individuals going to Jesus for help. Jesus changes their negative tattoos, representing their struggles, into positive ones.

Now, Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys have appealed a federal judge's May 29 ruling that allowed a Texas school district to refuse to display a faith-based ad on its Jumbotron during high school football games. The district denied the ad for because of its religious message even though the district permits other non-school-related organizations, including other religious groups, to advertise.

"Having a viewpoint that school officials don't favor isn't grounds for censorship," said ADF Legal Counsel Matt Sharp. "When a public school opens up a venue for community advertising, it cannot single out religious messages that it doesn't like. The First Amendment protects freedom of speech for all Americans, regardless of their religious beliefs."

The district explained to Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys that it denied Miller's request because the district, by its own policies and practices, "is prohibited from allowing religious advertisements with the use of government property based on the Establishment Clause." Despite the explanation,

the district routinely permits various other faith-based, non-school-related organizations to advertise, such as Full Armor Ministries, Lubbock Christian University, Sunset Church of Christ's Just Kids Preschool and Bethany Baptist Church. It also allows numerous non-religious, non-school-related organizations to advertise.

ADF attorneys appealed the case, *Little Pencil v. Lubbock Independent School District*, to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit on Thursday after a federal district judge ruled last month that the school district can single out the "Jesus Tattoo" ad for censorship. ADF filed the lawsuit on Jan. 28.

"It's not the government's job to pick and choose between religious organizations and their missions when determining who can have ad space," added ADF Senior Counsel Kevin Theriot.

"The district court's decision was in error, and we hope the 5th Circuit will affirm that the constitutionally protected messages of all Americans should be free from government censorship."

Watch the gripping Jesus Tattoo evangelistic video below: