

Ten Commandments Display Remains in Virginia School

In another victory for the **Ten Commandments**, the Giles County School Board is allowed the Foundations of Law and Government display to remain on the walls of Narrows High School in Narrows, Va.

The Foundations of Law and Government display includes the tablets of the **Ten Commandments**, which apparently offended the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The ACLU of Virginia sued the Giles County School Board after the board adopted an open forum policy, which permits the display of historical documents by private individuals or groups. But the Liberty Counsel worked to reach a settlement that would allow the display to remain.

“The school board is very pleased with the settlement. The open forum for private citizens and the displays on law and government will remain, including the **Ten Commandments** tablets as part of the ‘Roots of Democracy’ frame,” said Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel.

“The displays are visual teaching tools about law and government, which the students in Virginia study as part of American and world history. These display documents are good models for other schools to follow.”

Here’s the backstory: A privately sponsored Foundations of American Law and Government display consisting of the **Ten Commandments**, in equally-sized frames, was posted in Narrows High School.

The display also includes the Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, Mayflower Compact, Bill of Rights, George Mason’s Declaration of Rights, and Jefferson’s Statute for Religious Freedom.

Additional historical documents were later posted at the request of a local citizen, consisting of the First Charter of Virginia, the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, a depiction and quote of Patrick Henry, a depiction of Minutemen, a depiction of George Washington, Washington's Farewell Address, a depiction of Thomas Jefferson, Jefferson's letters to the Danbury Baptists and to Reverend Samuel Miller, Jefferson's 1779 Thanksgiving Proclamation, and the Northwest Ordinance. In total, there are 29 frames.

Following the ACLU suit and discovery, the private donor of the Foundations display proposed, and the board agreed, to exchange the frame of the text of the **Ten Commandments** with the framed "Roots of Democracy" page from the American history textbook.

At the top of the "Roots of Democracy" graphic is the **Ten Commandments** tablets with Mount Sinai in the background with the following words underneath: "The values found in the Bible, including the **Ten Commandments** and the teachings of Jesus, inspired American ideas about government and morality."

The Roots of Democracy traces the history of our modern Republic in pictures and words beginning with the Ten Commandments and including the Magna Carta, Roman and Greco law, Enlightenment thinkers with Montesquieu and John Locke, and English Parliamentary Traditions.

The Virginia Standards of Learning requires students to know about the foundational principles of civilizations, including the Hebrews, and the foundations of law and government. Secular textbooks published by Prentice Hall and McGraw-Hill trace the roots of democracy and law and specifically refer to the **Ten Commandments** and many of the documents posted as part of the display.