

WA School Principal Says No to Interfaith Prayer Club After Allowing Pride Club a Week Earlier

Two Washington elementary school students are demanding that their school allow them to start an interfaith prayer club after the school's principal denied them access to meet on school grounds.

First Liberty Institute, a non-profit legal group, is representing two students from Creekside Elementary and their parents, claiming that school officials engaged in religious discrimination when they denied the students the opportunity to start a prayer group.

According to the law group, students . and J.W. have friends from many different faith backgrounds and wanted to start a prayer club after school to "bring students together to serve their community."

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. and her mother met with Creekside Principal Amy Allison twice in February about the club, but Allison claimed that all the funding for school clubs was allocated in October, so the club would not be allowed to meet.

An LGBTQ Pride club, however, was launched and promoted by teachers just a week before . met with the principal.

Allison told . that her only option for the prayer club was to pay for space like outside groups.

First Liberty Institute wrote a letter on behalf of the

students alleging Allison's actions were unlawful and violated both the Free Exercise Clause and the Free Speech Clause.

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"Principal Allison's suggestion that . could apply and pay to use the school's facilities as if she were an outside organization is an unlawful sidestep of the law's requirements. As the Supreme Court has repeatedly held, religious clubs must be afforded the same recognition, access, and rights as other non-curricular clubs," the letter reads.

First Liberty is giving Issaquah School District and Creekside Elementary School until Apr. 22, to approve the prayer club stating it is a "time-sensitive matter." {eo}

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