

Lawsuit Seeks . . .

To Block "Radical Homosexual Sex Ed Curriculum"

By SUSAN JONES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (CN-SNews) — Two days after a local family rights group filed a lawsuit against a public school system's new "homosexual sex ed curriculum," a federal judge issued a restraining order blocking Montgomery County public schools from instituting the program.

On May 3, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays filed suit accusing the school district of "denigrating" ex-gays in the materials, and having "an irrational phobia of the ex-gay community."

U.S. District Judge Alexander Williams agreed, saying that the program depicts some Christian sects, notably Baptists, as unenlightened and biblically misguided.

"The court is extremely troubled by the willingness of the defendants to venture, or perhaps more correctly, bound, into the crossroads of controversy where religion, morality, and homosexuality converge," Williams said.

The pilot program — approved by the Montgomery County school board last November — with videotaped instructions on how to use condoms and conversations on homosexuality, was set to begin on May 6.

While questioning the school system attorney Judith Bresler, Judge Williams suggested the system was taking a position on morals, telling her, "We seem to be tilting toward a particular view."

Representing the plaintiffs, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays (PFOX) and Citizens for a

Responsible Curriculum, was the Liberty Counsel.

"The school board has been captured by radical homosexual advocacy groups whose only agenda is to promote their political goals without respect to the consequences," said Mathew D. Staver, Liberty Counsel's president and general counsel.

Staver said the Montgomery County curriculum is "inaccurate and unashamedly hostile to certain Christian views."

Liberty Counsel offers the following examples from the instruction booklet:

- "Fact: Most experts in the field have concluded that sexual orientation is not a choice";
- "Fact: Sex play with friends of the same gender is not uncommon during early adolescence and does not prove long-term sexual orientation";
- "It is no more abnormal or sick to be homosexual than to be left-handed";
- "Heterosexual parents are consistently not found to be more loving or caring than gay parents";
- "Jesus said absolutely nothing at all about homosexuality";
- "Religion has often been misused to justify hatred and oppression";
- "One's sexual and emotional orientations are fixed at an early age — certainly by age five";
- "Many homophobic responses are born out of a fear that one's own sexual orientation may not be entirely heterosexual";
- "Abstinence until marriage" is detrimental to "GLBT youth."

According to the Liberty Counsel, the sex ed curriculum mentions that "fundamentalists" and "evangelicals" may think they can overcome same-sex attraction, and therefore, it says questioning students should be referred to "sensitive clergy" to "reconcile their religious beliefs."

The curriculum never refers to husband and wife, the Liberty Counsel said. Instead, family is defined as "two or more people who are joined together by emotional feelings or who are related to one another."

One video features a high school girl using a cucumber to show how a condom is used.

Liberty Counsel said every proposed teacher resource the plaintiffs submitted to present the "ex-gay" perspective was rejected.

The plaintiffs say the curriculum promotes dangerous sexual activity without any discussion of its health risks, such as diseases associated with homosexual behavior.

Said Staver, "When sexually transmitted diseases are epidemic in some portions of the country, especially among [those practicing] same-sex behavior, it is inconceivable that a school board would promote such activity without presenting any associated medical risk."

Under current school policy, Montgomery County teachers may answer questions about homosexuality, but they are not allowed to broach the topic themselves.

School policy also allows students to "opt out" of the curriculum altogether.