



Written by [James Murphy](#) on April 5, 2023

Virginia School District Forbids Teacher to Use Bible Verse in Email Signature

In Virginia, the Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) system has become infamous for [pushing](#) transgender ideology, [teaching](#) radical critical race theory curriculum, and calling police on parents who [speak out](#) during school board meetings. Now, anti-Christian bigotry can be added to their growing list of insults against their teachers, students, and community.

A [statement](#) released on Monday by Liberty Counsel, an organization that defends religious liberties, demands that the LCPS reverse a decision that forced a teacher to remove a Bible verse from her email signature. The unnamed teacher had been using John 3:16 — “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” — in her email tagline prior to the school district insisting that she remove the quote.

LCPS claimed that the Bible verse is prohibited by the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

The teacher attempted to replace John 3:16 with a verse with less religious connotation to it: Proverbs 23:6 — “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” — but the district found that objectionable as well.

In a [letter](#) to LCPS, Liberty Counsel called for the district to immediately reinstate the teacher’s chosen Bible quote and hinted of follow-up action if that request is not honored.

“We are writing to request that the District permit Mrs. [redacted] to restore the Bible verse to her email signature block. Please direct us to designated District counsel, and provide a written response by April 6, 2023, to prevent the need for further action by Liberty Counsel.”

Liberty Counsel accused the school district of discrimination and a violation of the First Amendment.

“The directive from LCPS to Mrs. ____ to remove an expression of her personal faith from her email signature block, based solely on its perceived religious nature, constitutes religious discrimination (whether in a limited public forum or nonpublic forum) in violation of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and District policy,” the Liberty Counsel letter states.

At the same time the teacher in question is being censored for putting a Bible verse in her email signature, Liberty Counsel points out, other teachers commonly use motivational quotes inspired by other religions, with one teacher even using a quote from far-left labor leader Cesar Chavez, who some



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claim was a communist.

According to LCPS, the teacher's inclusion of the Bible verse in her email exchanges constitutes the school district's endorsement of her Christian faith.

"These communications are not private expression, but rather constitute school-sponsored speech bearing the ostensible endorsement of the School Division — particularly when such emails reflect the "lcps.org" email domain," reads a [letter](#) from Acting Superintendent Daniel Smith.

"Simply put, the general inclusion of religious quotes in communications LCPS employees send while in their public capacities is not private expression and runs afoul of the Establishment Clause, and as such, bars LCPS, as a local governmental entity, from taking sides in religious disputes or favoring or disfavoring anyone based on religion or belief, or lack thereof," Smith went on.

But Liberty Counsel founder Mat Staver responded that several recent court rulings argue against LCPS's policy.

"The decisions from the Supreme Court involving the Christian flag [displayed in a public forum] and [a high-school football coach] send a clear message that ... government must not discriminate based on religious viewpoint. Loudoun County Public Schools cannot discriminate against a teacher who wants to use a Bible verse in her signature when other teachers are including nonreligious quotes," Staver noted.

Considering LCPS's history, it seems certain that a lawsuit is coming at some point in the near future.

It seems a rather crazy hill to die on, but it goes to show the lengths to which public schools in America are looking to get rid of God in all things. When the Supreme Court ruled on *Engel v. Vitale* in 1962, it claimed it was only putting an end to school-sponsored prayers. Of course, it turned out to be much more than that, with schools essentially removing any mention of God, the Ten Commandments, or anything even remotely religious.

However, last year in *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, the majority affirmed a high-school football coach's right to pray with his team after games. Perhaps — even if just a little bit — the tide is turning against the religious bigotry in public schools. We can hope (and pray) that change is on the way.





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