



**The Washington Flyer**  
**April 15, 2022**

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*  
*1 Peter 1:3*

**AACS National Bible, Fine Arts and Academic Competition Report**

Last week, the AACS National Competition was held in Greenville, SC. Almost 1800 students and sponsors from 172 schools representing 28 states competed in 76 different categories in Bible, art, music, speech, and academics. Throughout the week, Dr. Nathan Crockett, professor at Bob Jones University, preached a series of messages challenging and encouraging students to live for the Lord. Bob Jones University faculty and staff graciously facilitated the student activities and accommodations. The three-day competition culminated at the Thursday night awards ceremony, which included a showcase highlighting some of the best entries by several individuals and schools. Virginia (Old Dominion Association of Church Schools) won the AACS Cup of Excellence, which is awarded to the state that accumulates the highest point total. North Carolina, Tennessee, Illinois, Georgia, Kansas, South Carolina, Florida, Indiana, and New Jersey were also among the top states. The AACS offers our warmest congratulations to all the students who participated and made this year’s National Competition a memorable event. To view the complete list of this year’s winners, click [here](#). For pictures and information from the event, please visit our Facebook page [here](#).

**Battle to Protect Parental Rights and Youth in Education**

While several states are taking steps to protect parental rights in education and stop the infusion of transgender ideology into K–12 classrooms, the Biden administration has officially stated unequivocal [support](#) for sex-reassignment procedures for minors. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released [two documents](#) which compel the use of puberty blockers and sex-reassignment surgeries for minors, calling the treatments “gender affirming care” and denouncing the charges that such procedures are harmful to children. In a [video statement](#), President Biden referred to “anti-transgender state laws” as “simply wrong” and “hateful,” and indicated his administration would fight such laws. However, several states are taking legal action to fight the harmful practices and policies which advance the transgender ideology. Just this week, the [Kentucky](#) legislature voted to override Governor Andy Beshear’s veto of a bill which prohibits males from competing in female sports. In Alabama, Governor Kay Ivey signed two bills into law, one which [prohibits prescriptions](#) for puberty-blocking hormones for minors and the [other](#) which prohibits teachers from discussing sexual orientation and gender identity in elementary grades through fifth grade. In [Georgia](#), Governor Brian Kemp has indicated he will sign the “Parent’s Bill of Rights” (HB 1178) which explicitly states that parents have a “fundamental right . . . to direct the upbringing and education of their minor children,” specifying that this includes “moral or religious training,” reviewing a child’s records, and reviewing instructional materials that are being used in schools. In a [recent episode](#) of the podcast “The Briefing,” Albert Mohler points out that the fight for parental rights in education is not a new battle and that the core issue is not just who controls what topics are being taught but who controls the minds of students.

## **Pro-Life Update from the States**

[Several states](#) have moved to protect the lives of unborn babies as the Supreme Court considers a case that could overturn the constitutional right to an abortion first discovered in the 1973 case *Roe v. Wade*. The new case, [Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization](#), could return the authority to determine abortion policy to the states, allowing many states to strengthen protections for unborn babies. Currently, twelve states have laws in place that would limit abortions if the Court rules to overturn *Roe*, and other states are considering such legislation. The states range in the level of protection for unborn babies, from Oklahoma's bill to ban abortions after conception to West Virginia's new law that protects babies with Down Syndrome from being aborted. Several states have passed or are considering laws that restrict abortions to only the first 15 weeks gestation or that prohibit abortions once a fetal heartbeat can be detected, around 6 weeks gestation. Advances in medicine and science since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision have only strengthened the pro-life argument that unborn babies are unique individuals worthy of protection. A recent *Wall Street Journal* [poll](#) found that 48% of Americans somewhat or strongly support a ban on abortions after 15 weeks, compared to 44% who oppose such a ban. The poll echoes an [analysis](#) by pro-life organization Live Action that found that even though a majority of Americans support legalized abortion, very few support abortion on demand for any reason and at any time. As the slew of recent pro-life legislation shows, many states are preparing to bolster protections for life if the Court overrules *Roe* this summer.

## **Massachusetts Church Faces Battle in Effort to Start a Christian School**

In Somerville, Massachusetts, just outside of Boston, the Vida Real Church is [fighting](#) local government officials to open a Christian school in the neighborhood. Massachusetts law requires that private schools be approved by elected local school committees to operate in the state. When Vida Real [applied](#) to open a private Christian school, the Somerville School Committee sent a lengthy questionnaire to the church, followed by a report in which the Educational Programs Subcommittee criticized the religious beliefs of the church, casting doubt on Vida Real's ability to educate children. The report stated that "the school's position on homosexuality and creationism make it difficult to see how a thorough science and health curriculum is possible. . . . Overall, the school was entirely contrary to the values of SPS and the idea of educating the whole child as being inclusive." First Liberty Institute and Massachusetts Family Institute sent a [joint letter](#) to the committee and superintendent stating that "the Committee has expressed hostility towards Vida Real's religious beliefs" and demanding that the government approve Vida Real's application to open a Christian school. The letter reveals that the subcommittee ultimately recommended that Vida Real not be permitted to open a Christian school based on the biblical beliefs and values it would teach to children. The subcommittee's finding is contrary to Massachusetts law, which prohibits school committees from denying approval of religious schools based on their beliefs and teachings. First Liberty and Massachusetts Family Institute close their letter by indicating that if the committee does not grant Vida Real's application by April 18, they will consider legal options.

## **In Case You Missed It:**

[Weekly Market Update](#) provided by Jeff Beach of the [AACIS Investment Team at Merrill Lynch](#)

[Practical Legal Help for Christian Schools: ADF Ministry Alliance](#)

[Promise to America's Children](#)

[Angry Parents = Better Schools](#)