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*“If virtue and knowledge are diffused among the people, they will never be enslav’d.  
This will be their great security.”*  
**Sam Adams**

**AACS Will Host Annual Youth Legislative Training Conference Next Week**

The AACS is looking forward to hosting the annual [AACCS Youth Legislative Training Conference](#) next week, offering AACS students from across the country the opportunity to experience the political workings of Washington, D.C., from a Biblical worldview. Please join us in praying for a profitable week that educates the students and inspires them to diligently seek the Lord and His will regarding their future roles and how they may serve Him through service to their country. Due to the activities of the conference week, there will be no *Washington Flyer* next week. We invite you to follow the activities of the week through Facebook ([@AACCSeducates](#)), Instagram ([@yltc\\_aacs](#)), and Twitter ([@AACCS\\_DC](#)).

**AACS Submits Amicus Brief Supporting Tax-Exempt Status for Religious Institutions**

The AACS has submitted an amicus brief to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, urging a reversal of a decision by a district court which ruled that the tax-exempt status of a religious school makes the school a recipient of federal financial assistance. The [case](#), *Buettner-Hartsoe v. Baltimore Lutheran High School Association*, involves five girls which sued the Lutheran school for not adequately addressing their complaints of sexual harassment, as required in Title IX. The school moved to dismiss the claim on the grounds that it is not subject to Title IX because it is not a recipient of federal financial assistance. However, the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland decided against the school, ruling that the tax-exempt status of the school constituted “federal financial assistance,” and, thus, made the school subject to Title IX. The case has been appealed to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, and the AACS has joined several other Christian education organizations in submitting an amicus brief that urges the Court to reverse the decision.

The amicus brief points to the text and structure of Title IX and provides a thorough explanation of the difference between receiving federal financial assistance and holding a tax-exempt status. “Receiving federal financial assistance means taking funding in some form from the government, such as grants loans, or contracts,” the brief explains. “Tax exemption is nothing like those forms of funding—no federal dollars are dispersed or received when an entity is deemed tax exempt.” The brief also points to Supreme Court precedent which confirms that tax-exempt status does not equal federal financial assistance to non-profit religious institutions. In the 1970 decision for *Walz v. Tax Commission of the City of New York*, the Supreme Court explained that tax-exempt status “does not transfer part of [the government’s] revenue to churches but simply abstains from demanding that the church support the state.” Finally, the amicus brief pointed to the “significant ramifications” for non-profit institutions—including religious schools, associations, charities, clinics, houses of worships, and other non-profit organizations—that would occur if the tax-exempt distinction were changed to mean recipient of government funds. The brief explains that these privately funded organizations would be “subjected to intrusive federal regulations that neither the organizations nor the agencies implementing those regulations expected and that Congress never intended.”

## **Injunction Slows Minnesota’s Attack on Religious Colleges**

An [injunction](#) from United States District Judge Nancy Brasel paused a Minnesota law that prevents religious schools from participating in the state’s dual enrollment program. The post-secondary enrollment program (PSEO), created through legislation in 1985, allows high school students in 10th, 11th, or 12th grades to take college courses tuition free from institutions located in Minnesota. According to the MN Department of Education website, “each participating college and university sets their own requirements and deadlines for enrollment into PSEO courses and programs.” However, an amendment to a bill passed in 2023 stated that “an eligible institution must not require a faith statement” from a high school student during the application process, nor could the institution “base any part of the admission on a student’s . . . religious beliefs or affiliations.” A [lawsuit](#) was filed against the new law by Becket Fund, representing two families and two Christian colleges, charging that it violates religious liberty by forcing the colleges and students to choose between their faith and a publicly available benefit. The injunction stops state officials from enforcing the law while the lawsuit, [Loe v. Walz](#), is ongoing. “We are glad that Minnesota has agreed not to punish our children and many students like them for wanting to learn at schools that reflect their values,” [said](#) Mark and Melinda Loe, one of the families represented in the lawsuit. Diana Thomson, senior counsel at Becket, [praised](#) the move by the court: “As this effort to walk back demonstrates, the state didn’t do its homework before it passed this unconstitutional law. The next step is for the court to strike down this ban for good.”

## **Teachers Unions and Public Schools Hide Reports of Sexual Abuse**

The Defense of Freedom Institute recently released a [report](#) which reveals that many public school districts and local education agencies often work with teachers unions to hide or dismiss sexual misconduct or abuse by teachers. The report points to testimonies that show that, rather than investigating or firing an employee accused of sexual misconduct, the local education agencies will often reassign the teachers to a different district or allow a resignation, a practice called “passing the trash.” Collective bargaining agreements between school districts and unions often ensure that personnel files are scrubbed clean, so limited information is passed on to employers about a potential employee’s record. The costs for investigating and firing employees can be extremely high, causing many school officials to “pass the trash” rather than deal with the problem. The report references data from 2010–2018 from the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education which shows that the number of reported complaints of sexual abuse was on the rise; however, the report also points out that the last published data is from 2017–18, “so parents, teachers, and students, do not have timely, reliable, and publicly available data about sexual abuse in their schools.” Rep. Virginia Foxx (NC), Chairman of the House Ed and Workforce Committee, [noted](#) that the report “highlights a pattern of gross misconduct by school officials and the Department of Education—who are beholden to teachers unions—to conceal directly or indirectly sexual abuse in K-12 public schools.” She added that these actions are “putting children in harm’s way” and the report “shines a spotlight” on the “consequences of the Left’s radical education agenda.”

## **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](#)

[Celebrating the First Anniversary of Post-Roe America](#)