



**The Washington Flyer**  
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*“The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country.”*  
*Calvin Coolidge*

**Victory for Christian School in Battle with Local School Board**

The Greenfield Public School (GPS) committee in Massachusetts has [voted to approve](#) the opening of Providence Christian Academy after initially considering a rejection of the school’s application because of the religious nature of the school’s curriculum. The school plans to open as a ministry of Providence Moldovan Baptist Church and sent an application to the GPS committee for approval. GPS committee chair Amy Proietti [explained](#) this process is standard procedure for a new school according to the state’s Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. However, when the committee first considered the application on July 12, committee member Elizabeth de Neeve voiced concerns over the Abeka curriculum used by the school, charging it is “in direct opposition to the values of GPS.” She pointed to certain issues and how these issues were presented in the curriculum—including the Civil War, racism, socialism, and LGBTQ issues—as the basis for her claim that it is “full of false information.” In a social media [post](#), she stated, “I am calling for action because this private school is using a controversial creationist curriculum called Abeka, which is associated with nationally-funded [*sic*] right-wing Christian groups and teaches students a very different view of the world from what’s taught in the rest of Greenfield’s public and private schools.” The July 12 discussion ended with a 4-2 vote to table the approval vote until a later date.

The committee’s discussion and vote prompted Liberty Counsel to send a [letter](#) explaining how the committee’s words and actions constituted religious discrimination, violating the First Amendment and state law. Pointing to Massachusetts’s state law, the letter reminds the school committee that their job is to “approve a private school when satisfied that the instruction in all the studies required by law equals in thoroughness and efficiency . . . that in the public schools,” and the law further states emphatically that the committee “shall not withhold such approval on account of religious teaching.” Furthermore, the letter outlined the protections in the First Amendment that prohibit a government entity from discriminating based on religious views, from promoting a secular ideology, from prohibiting the use of a religious curriculum, and from denying parents the right to choose a religious education for their child. First Liberty pointed to multiple court cases that upheld the rights of religious schools and also the financial costs which were incurred by the government entities which tried to stop religious instruction. The letter urged the committee to approve the school’s application by August 10 or face a lawsuit for religious discrimination. The committee held a virtual meeting on July 31 and voted 4-1 (with two abstentions) to approve the school’s application. Mat Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, [responded](#) to the school board’s decision, saying, “The Greenfield School Committee needs to control the rhetoric and personal advocacy of some of its members. Personal advocacy coupled with unhinged false statements denigrating a Christian school will not play well in a court of law. While we are pleased that Providence Christian Academy will begin accepting students this fall, we remain astounded concerning the statements made by some committee members.”

## **Bill Goes After Parents Who Do Not “Affirm” Child’s Chosen Gender Identity**

Over 100 parents and locals attended a California Senate Judicial Committee meeting to voice their disapproval of California Assembly Bill 957. The bill would require courts to consider a parent’s affirmation of a child’s gender identity in custody cases. Critics warned the bill could put parents in danger of child abuse charges if they do not accept their child’s gender transition. “My daughter was taken from her loving home because the State of California claimed I was abusive for not affirming her trans identity,” [said](#) mother Abigail Martinez at the meeting. “I lost my daughter over a name and pronouns—even after I promised to call her a male name.” Only 17 residents of California spoke in favor of the bill, which was introduced by Assemblywoman Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City), the mother of a transgender-identifying child. Wilson [claimed](#) the bill would simply be one of many factors a judge would consider in custody cases. The bill passed out of committee and now faces votes from the California Senate and Assembly. “We have put government bureaucrats between parents, children, and doctors when it comes to medical care—and now we have [AB 957] where if a parent does not support the ideology of the government, [children are] going to be taken away from the home,” [said](#) Sen. Scott Wilk, one of the two Republicans on California’s Senate Judiciary Committee. *Written by AACS summer intern Sarah Butler*

## **Arizona School Board Reverses Discriminatory Decision Against Christian University**

The Washington Elementary School District in Phoenix and Glendale, Arizona, has [voted](#) to once again allow student teachers from Arizona Christian University (ACU) to be placed in their district schools, returning to an agreement that often led to employment opportunities. The school board had [previously voted](#) in February to dissolve their contract with ACU [based](#) on the school board’s stated “commitment to create a safe place for our LGBTQ+ students, staff, and community,” of which three of the board members claim to be a part. Alliance Defending Freedom filed a [lawsuit](#) on behalf of ACU, charging that the board’s decision constituted religious discrimination, violating the U.S. Constitution as well as Arizona laws protecting religious liberty. The ACU had also issued a [call to prayer](#) for the situation, specifically encouraging prayer for the school board members, Christian teachers affected by the decision, and victory in the court. The school board responded to the lawsuit by voting to renew the agreement with ACU and to approve a stronger, five-year contract with the school, as well as to pay the attorney fees for the case. ACU president Len Muncil [stated](#), “This is a complete vindication of the rights of our students to be able to participate as student-teachers in a public school district without fear of religious discrimination. We obtained everything we wanted in this new agreement, without any sacrifice or compromise to our beliefs and our university’s religious purpose.”

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

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

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

[Promise to America’s Children](#)

[Gender Ideology Imperils Freedom](#)