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“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”
Isaiah 9:6

Merry Christmas!

Next week we will not be sending out our regular *Washington Flyer* as we pause to celebrate the birth of our Savior. We will send a special New Year’s message next week and resume our normal weekly *Washington Flyer* after the New Year. The AACCS staff wishes you a very Merry Christmas filled with reminders of God’s goodness and love to us in sending Jesus, our Savior!

Wisconsin School Choice Program Survives Legal Challenge

The Wisconsin State Supreme Court has [declined](#) to hear a case which challenged the constitutionality of the state’s decades-old school choice programs. Wisconsin’s [Parental Choice Program](#) is the [first modern](#) school choice program, created in 1990 to offer private school vouchers to families in Milwaukee. The program expanded to Racine in 2011, and then to families across the state in 2013. Additionally, the state has added a charter school program and a Special Needs Scholarship Program. The liberal Minocqua Brewing Super PAC filed the [lawsuit](#), charging that the programs violate the state constitution by diverting funds from public education. The lawsuit was filed directly with the state supreme court, which [recently flipped](#) to a liberal 4-3 majority. However, in this case the court was unanimous in its decision not to hear the case, sending it back to lower courts for consideration.

The Wisconsin Liberty Justice Center [filed an amicus brief](#) which urged the court to reject the case, pointing to the 65,000 plus students that would be back in public schools if the school choice programs were canceled. “Granting the petitioners’ request would have had devastating consequences—not only for the many students enrolled in Wisconsin’s school choice programs, but also for those attending Wisconsin’s already overburdened public schools,” stated Dean McGee, Educational Freedom Attorney for the Liberty Justice Center. The Wisconsin Family Institute, which also advocates for the school choice programs, recently published an [article](#) defending school choice and explaining the fact that the vouchers constitute only a percentage of the per-pupil funding that districts receive. In other words, the “programs are saving taxpayers money.” Additionally, the Wisconsin Family Institute highlighted the importance of a system that not only meets the different needs of each student but also meets the diverse needs of families: “Many families today, especially Christians, are realizing public schools are foisting values on their children that are antithetical to their family values. A one-size-fits-all approach to education simply does not suffice.” While the decision of the state supreme court not to hear the case is a victory for school choice, there is still the possibility that the court would hear the case at a later date should a lower court rule against the programs. School choice advocates are prepared to defend these programs that bring opportunities for students. As Wisconsin Family Action states, “School choice ensures that parents can tailor their child’s education to match what they want for their children, fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and personally, and also for many, spiritually.”

VA Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Teacher in Pronoun Case

The Virginia Supreme Court has ruled in favor of a teacher who was fired for [refusing to refer](#) to a female student by masculine pronouns. Peter Vlaming taught high school French in the district of West Point, Virginia. Vlaming did his best to accommodate one of his returning students who requested to be called by a masculine name and pronouns. To avoid singling out the student, Vlaming stopped using personal pronouns and instead referred to all students by their chosen French names. However, administrators at the school still targeted Vlaming, telling him he must start using the student's masculine pronouns. When Vlaming refused to violate his sincerely held religious convictions, he was fired. But Vlaming fought back and filed a lawsuit against the school board and the school leaders who threatened him. He appealed to the Virginia Supreme Court after losing at the circuit court. The state supreme court sided with Vlaming, highlighting that he was being compelled to speak against his religious beliefs. In the majority [opinion](#) for the case, the justices delineated Virginia's rich heritage of protecting religious liberty and speech since the time of the Founders. "The Virginia Supreme Court rightly vindicated Vlaming's right to stand by his convictions in its decision," said Alliance Defending Freedom Senior Counsel Chris Schandavel. The case has been revived and sent back to the lower courts for further consideration.

Coming Up: National School Choice Week

[National School Choice Week \(NSCW\) begins January 21, 2024](#), providing families and schools an opportunity to highlight the positive impact that school choice has had in the lives of thousands of students. Since the first celebration of NSCW in 2011, the organizers have helped plan or promote over 270,000 events which have highlighted the benefits of school choice for children and families. For materials and ideas for your school or event, please [click here](#).

Just Around the Corner: March for Life 2024

The 50th March for Life will take place in Washington, D.C., on January 19, 2024. The annual march began in 1973, with the goal of overturning the Supreme Court's infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision. Since the Supreme Court overruled *Roe* in the case *Dodd v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, pro-life advocates have continued the fight to protect pre-born lives from abortion across the country, and also emphasize the need of caring for the mothers. "We really try to discern what's most pressing in the moment, and the heart of the pro-life movement is really support for moms," [stated](#) March for Life President Jeanne Mancini. For more information on participating in the March for Life, please [click here](#).

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](#)

[Pennsylvania Expands School Choice Program](#)

[Ohio Passes SAFE Act to Protect Children](#)