

From: **Jim Rigano**
Date: Fri, May 31, 2013 at 9:19 AM
Subject: Controversial Issues Policy
To: rita@rutherford.org

Dear Ms. Dunaway,

My name is Jim Rigano and I am a school board member in Springboro, OH. We have recently become involved in a controversy over our controversial issues policy which you may have caught on the national news earlier this week. John Freshwater did, and contacted us to make us aware of his case pending before the Ohio Supreme Court and provided us links to video where you argued his case. After watching the video, I think Mr. Freshwater must be well pleased with your performance.

Our situations are similar in that they both involve the issue of academic freedom for teachers, but different because we are approaching this from the direction of policy. I drafted, and proposed to the Board, policy language that would require teaching of all controversial issues in a balanced way and then we proceed to list some controversial issues, evolution/creation being one of them. While not specifically stated, one goal of our revised policy is to require science teachers to teach all sides of the evolution theory, including gaps and contrary science. We have not adopted the revised language yet.

The inclusion of the word "creation" has set off the ACLU and their allies, although we intend the word in a larger sense to mean the origin of the universe, earth and man. They, of course, have threatened us citing a long list of legal cases. However, at this point our Board is willing to take on the issue.

I also drafted a change to a policy related to religious and patriotic observances. This change has not received so much attention, but as the issue moves forward could become entangled. This change attempts to make clear that teaching religion and religious motivation in a historical context is expressly permitted.

If not too big an imposition, would you be willing to examine our proposed policies and suggest any modification that might be useful to legally defend the goals of the policies. I've attached the drafts for your reference and also our standing policy on religion in schools.

Best regards,
Jim Rigano
School Board Member, Springboro Community City School District
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