



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on December 22, 2009

Effort Continues to Oust “Safe Schools Czar”

Congressman Steve King (R-Iowa) is not giving up his effort to have Kevin Jennings fired as President Obama’s “school safety czar,” despite not having received a reply from the President two months after King and 52 other members of the U.S. House of Representative sent a letter to the White House, calling for the ouster of the controversial Department of Education official.



In early October, King became the first member of Congress to call for the dismissal of Jennings, who was appointed by Obama to head the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. On October 15, King and 52 other House Republicans sent a letter to the President, repeating that call and claiming that Jennings “lacks the appropriate qualifications and ethical standards to serve in this capacity.” The letter detailed reasons why the representatives believe Jennings, founder of the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network, has “played an integral role in promoting homosexuality and pushing a pro-homosexual agenda in America’s schools — an agenda that runs counter to the values that many parents desire to instill in their children.”

Jennings, the representatives noted, wrote the forward for a book entitled *Queering Elementary Education: Advancing the Dialogue About Sexualities and Schooling*. In his own book *One Teacher in Ten*, he recounts a 15-year-old student confiding in him that he had a sexual relationship with an adult male. “Mr. Jennings’ only response was to ask if the underage boy used a condom,” the letter said. “As a mandatory reporter, Mr. Jennings was required by law to report child abuse, including sex crimes. Mr. Jennings cannot serve as the ‘safe schools’ czar when his record demonstrates a willingness to overlook the sexual abuse of a child,” the representatives stated.

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The letter also brought up a “history of unrepentant drug and alcohol abuse.” In a memoir entitled *Mama’s Boy, Preacher’s Son*, Jennings “describes his use of illegal drugs, without expressing regret or acknowledging the devastating effects illegal drug use can have on a person’s life,” the House members said. “Given these very serious issues with Mr. Jennings’ record, we urge you to remove him immediately,” the October letter concluded.



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King has now sent a follow-up letter to the White House, again calling on the President to fire Jennings. Meanwhile, Rep. Michael Burgess (R-Texas) has introduced a House resolution calling for the dismissal. King expressed dismay over the fact that in more than two months since he and his colleagues notified the President of their concerns about Jennings, there has still been no response from the White House.

“For some reason, even when 53 members of the United States Congress send a letter to the President of the United States, he doesn’t see that he has an obligation to respond to such a letter,” the congressman said. “So we’ve mounted a new effort to do that, and I am participating and cooperating in that.”

Revelations about Jennings and his “czar” position with the Department of Education have stirred up opposition in the Northeast, as well as in the “Bible belt” of Southern, Western and Midwestern states. In Massachusetts, Brian Camenker, head of pro-family organization MassResistance, is encouraging people throughout the United States to join the call for removal of the homosexual activist from a position of authority and influence within the U.S. Department of Education. And, Camenker points out, it’s not as though the man’s past was unknown to Obama at the time he made the appointment.

“The people of this country really need to understand that this is the mindset of Barack Obama, who by the way was a guest at Kevin Jennings’ house during the presidential campaign, and they raised money together,” Camenker said. “So it’s not like he doesn’t know what this is all about ... and people just need to stand up.” MassResistance is circulating an online petition calling for the resignation of Jennings.

In New Hampshire, the conservative, pro-family Cornerstone Policy Research has attempted to enlist the State Board of Education in the call to have Jennings removed. The organization sent a letter to the state board in October urging the adoption of a resolution to that effect. After a month went by, Cornerstone Education Liaison Ann Marie Banfield followed up with the board and received a letter of reply from Chairman John Lyons. Since the state board is the final non-judicial forum for appeal by students, faculty, or administrators in cases involving alleged misconduct in the schools, Lyons wrote, the board would take no positions on the controversy surrounding Jennings or the issues or causes the “safe schools czar” espouses. “My suggestion is that this is an issue that should be addressed in the political arena with our U.S. Senate and Congressional delegation. They can call for an investigation or resignation.”

“Clearly, the State Board was passing the buck,” Cornerstone said in a recent press release. The organization is, nonetheless, urging the public to contact members of the state’s U.S. House and Senate delegation to demand the removal of Jennings.

“As the founder of GLSEN (the Gay Lesbian and Straight Educational Network), and now the Safe School Czar, one of Mr. Jennings task is to promote an anti-bullying curriculum within the schools via the ‘Safe School Initiative,’” the Cornerstone statement said. “Cornerstone in no way endorses any type of bullying for any reason. Period. And we fully support the efforts of parents, teachers and school administrators to crack down on bullying that occurs within schools.” But, the group says, Jennings and other homosexual activists “have successfully used the anti-bullying campaign to promote a homosexual agenda within the public school system.”

Jennings apparently believes that he and like-minded people have a right to portray and encourage a favorable view of homosexual activity, even as “straight” society has favorably portrayed and encouraged heterosexual romance. He has been quoted as saying to a group he addressed in Iowa:



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“Every time kids read *Romeo and Juliet* or they’re urged to go to the prom or whatever it is, kids are aggressively recruited to be heterosexuals in this country.”

But if tolerance and respect for people of different views and even different sexual orientations is what Jennings is supposed to be promoting, he has sometimes found strange ways of expressing it.

Addressing a church audience in New York City on March 20, 2000, Jennings said the following: “We have to quit being afraid of the religious right. We also have to quit — I’m trying to find a way to say this. I’m trying not to say, ‘F— ’em!,’ which is what I want to say, because I don’t care what they think! Drop dead!”

Photo of Kevin Jennings: AP Images



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