



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 27, 2023

## Queer School Board Ends Agreement With Arizona Christian University Over Its Christian Worldview

Following the unanimous decision by five school board members — three of whom claim to be LGBT — to end an agreement with Arizona Christian University (ACU) over its Christian theology, the public-interest law firm Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) [filed suit](#). It claims religious discrimination against ACU, violating not only school policies but the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution as well.

For nearly 11 years ACU has had a friendly and supportive agreement with Arizona's largest school district, the Washington Elementary School District, to provide the district with student-teachers to support it. In a time when finding teachers and support staff was increasingly difficult, Washington Elementary appreciated the free assistance from ACU students.

That "appreciation" evaporated overnight on February 23, when the five-member school board voted unanimously to end that agreement. It was a noisy event, with parents voicing their unhappiness with the decision.

ADF filed suit on behalf of ACU earlier this month, using the board members' own words as recorded that night as proof of its deliberate and intentional violation of school board policy and guarantees of free speech and the equal protection clauses of the First Amendment.

The point person on the board who first discovered that ACU had values directly opposed to her own, Tamilya Valenzuela, calls herself a "bilingual, disabled, neurodivergent Queer Black Latina." As the renewal of the long-standing agreement with ACU was being discussed, she opened the bidding with this:

[O]ur vision in Washington Elementary School District is committed to achieving excellence for every child, every day, every opportunity. Every child.

When I go to Arizona Christian University's website, and I'm taking this directly from their website, "above all else be committed to Jesus Christ accomplishing His will in advancing His kingdom on Earth as in heaven."

Part of *their* values, is "influence, engage and transform the culture with Truth by promoting the biblically informed values that are foundational to Western civilization, including the centrality of family, traditional sexual morality, and lifelong marriage between one *man* and one *woman*." [Emphasis in the lawsuit.]



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She posed this rhetorical question for her soul mates on the board:

I want to know how bringing people from an institution that is ingrained in their values . . . will . . . impact three of your board members who are a part of the LGBTQ community.

We have added our pronouns at the dais as a solidarity - let our LGBT community know, that we stand, in making sure that they feel protected.

Are we only performing performative solidarity, or are we going to dig deep, and actually look at the partnerships that we're doing?

Those Christian "values" are obviously antithetical to those now making up the majority, if not all, of the school board in Washington Elementary School District. Valenzuela continued:

Because if we're bringing people in whose mission [is to] "above all else . . . influence people to be biblically minded," how does that hold space for people of other faiths[,] our members of the LGBT community[, or] people who think differently and do not have the same beliefs?

The ramparts must be defended! Biblical values are to be resoundingly rejected in favor of the values of the LGBT community that spring instead from the religion of humanism and reason alone:

At some point we need to get real with ourselves and take a look at who we're making legal contracts with and the message that that is sending to our community.

***Because that makes me feel like I could not be safe in this in this school district.***

That makes other queer kids, who are already facing attack from our lawmakers that they could not be safe in this community.

So I really want us to think hard about who we're partnering with deep dive and I want to ask the district, ***"is this school value aligned with what we're trying to do and making sure that all of our students feel safe?"*** [Emphasis added in the ADF brief; all errors in the original.]

Valenzuela was singing to the choir. Another defendant in the ADF lawsuit, board member and president Nikkie Gomez-Whaley, expressed her horror at how the ACU had infiltrated the school district with its Bible-thumping assistant teachers:

[W]hen I went and looked into not only [Arizona Christian's] core values but then the statement of faith that they ask their students to sign and live by, what gave me pause was it's not just teaching but it's teaching as they say um, with a Biblical lens, with a proselytizing is embedded into how they teach, and um, you know, I just don't believe that that belongs in schools and I would never want uh you know my son to talk about ***his two dads*** and be shamed by a teacher who believed a certain way and is at a school that demands that they uh, you know uh, teach through God's . . . their biblical lens. [Emphasis added.]



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Gomez-Whaley waxed positively breathless at the threat that the elementary kids under her management would face if the 11-year-old agreement with ACU were to be continued:

I do believe that we owe it to um especially all of our students when we're working in equity but especially our LGBTQ students and staff who are under fire who are not protected um and who we have already pledged to support we cannot continue to align ourselves with organizations that starkly contrast our values . . . and say that we legitimately care about diversity equity and inclusion and that we legitimately care about all of our families.

We cannot justify. The ends does [sic] not justify the means, in my opinion.

In 11 years there has not been a single complaint about or a single violation of any agreement or rule by any of the ACU students offering to assist teachers in the district. Not one. In fact, nearly a dozen of them have later been offered positions as teachers by the school district!

But that doesn't matter. To the queers that have somehow taken control of the Washington Elementary School District in Arizona, it's all about removing biblical ideology and replacing it with their current brand of humanism.

ADF senior counsel David Cortman said:

By discriminating against Arizona Christian University and denying it an opportunity to participate in the student teacher program because of its religious status and beliefs, the school district is in blatant violation of the U.S. Constitution, not to mention state law that protects ACU's religious freedom.

The lawsuit is asking the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona for relief, claiming that the actions by the queers on the school board "violated and continue to violate [ACU and its students'] constitutional rights to:

- free exercise of religion;
- equal protection;
- free speech and expressive association;
- be free from unconstitutional retaliation; [and]
- be free from religious favoritism and entanglement."

This represents in a microcosm the war between the secular state and Christ and His followers that is taking place elsewhere in the nation. It's a war that began with His birth, and will continue until He comes again.



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