



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on April 9, 2012

## School Reverses Decision, Allows Students to Sing “God Bless the USA”

Complaints from parents prompted school officials initially to remove the song entirely from the upcoming school assembly, with the school’s principal telling the local [Fox News](#) affiliate that in order to “maintain the focus on the original objective of sharing students’ knowledge of the U.S. States, and because of logistics,” the song had been removed from the schedule.



Greenwood himself weighed in on the changes to the hit song he released in 1984, saying in a statement: “The most important word in the whole piece of music is the word God, which is also in the title ‘God Bless The USA.’ Maybe the school should have asked the parents their thoughts before changing the lyrics to the song. They could have even asked the writer of the song, which I of course, would have said you can’t change the lyrics at all or any part of the song.”

Greenwood said that the song’s signature phrase has a “very important meaning for those in the military and their families, as well as new citizens coming into our country.” He noted that his song is often included in naturalization ceremonies, played after the national anthem. “If the song is good enough to be played and performed in its original setting under those circumstances, it surely should be good enough for our children,” Greenwood said.

As news of the decision to censor God from the song made it out into the media stream, pressure began to mount on school officials to change their minds. An online poll by the local Fox affiliate indicated that 80 percent of viewers disagreed with the move.

Ultimately the school district’s superintendent, Edward Fleury, relented, releasing a statement saying that the school would revert back to the song as written, leaving it up to individual students to decide whether or not they would sing the stanza “God bless the USA.”

Noting that political correctness has become an unavoidable part of life in the public sector, Fleury said that there are “traditional parts of our culture that are sacred, and we certainly had no intent to disrespect any part of that culture.”

He explained that the intent of the school assembly at which the song would be sung was “to celebrate the knowledge gained by fourth grade students studying the 50 states in a school event with their parents next week. The students will be singing two songs at the assembly. One will be a song about the 50 states, and the other will be ‘God Bless the USA.’ Students will be allowed to sing or not sing the words ‘God Bless the USA’ as they sing in celebration of their acquired knowledge. No other words will



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be substituted.”

Fleury conceded that “the use of the word God is acceptable in patriotic songs,” and insisted that school officials had not intended to censor the song. “We are certainly sorry if this approach was perhaps considered as disrespectful,” he said. “That was never the intent.”

On his website, Greenwood challenged Fleury’s insistence that censorship was not at the heart of the school’s actions. “A song is like a painting, when it is finished, it cannot be changed,” Greenwood wrote. “I feel this attempt to remove the word God, however, was meant to shield students from even hearing or repeating the word God.”

He added: “I have no trouble with loving the United States of America with any phrase such as ‘We love the USA.’ It’s just that in my song, God represents strength in faith, goodness, hope, and unity. I would hope that we haven’t lost the ability to speak aloud about the God we pray to for our continued existence as a free nation.”



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