



Texas Students Required to Pledge Allegiance to Mexico

Should American high school students be required to recite the pledge of allegiance? This is a question which has generated controversy over the years, but rarely if ever has the controversy centered on the notion that the students in question would be required to pledge allegiance to a foreign nation. Nevertheless, this was the situation at the high school in the McAllen, Texas Independent School District, where students were required to pledge allegiance to Mexico.



McAllen is only a few miles from the Mexican border, so the question of loyalty to one's own nation is particularly poignant as [drug cartels run amok](#) only a few miles away in the Mexican city of Reynosa. With Mexico in the midst of what amounts to a civil war, the pledge of loyalty to these United States should be a matter of honor to any Texan. According to press reports, the Mexican national anthem and pledge of allegiance were required on one occasion for students in the Spanish class taught by Reyna Santos.

Several of the basic facts do not appear to be in contention. On September 16, the students of Santos' class were required to learn and sing the Mexican national anthem and to recite the Mexican pledge of allegiance. The implications of this action, however, are in dispute between the school and one family which was offended by the requirement. For Brenda Brinsdon and her parents, Santos' actions were indefensible. However, as KRGV television reported, school officials endeavored to defend the teacher's actions:

A spokesperson for the McAllen Independent School District says the incident involved one lesson on Hispanic culture in America. He says all students in the district recite the American pledge of allegiance every day.

The school's spokesperson also says the reciting of the Mexican pledge was only part of a temporary lesson leading up to the Mexican Independence Day on September 16.

According to [an article at HotAir.com](#), Santos defended her actions by appealing to her own heritage: "The response of the teacher? Reyna Santos explained that she grew up in Mexico and loved the country." School district spokesman Mark May also allegedly claimed that the assignment was "no different than memorizing a poem or a passage of Shakespeare."

The Brinsdon family recognized that there is a difference between a pledge of allegiance for a foreign government and reciting a few lines from *Hamlet* or *Henry V*. What is under contention is not the value



Written by [James Heiser](#) on October 19, 2011

of memorizing Mexican literature for a Spanish class, but requiring students to pledge their loyalty to a nation mere miles away. Again, according to the HotAir.com article:

Brinsdon was particularly bothered by the timing of the assignment, which came last month during “Freedom Week,” the week after the Tenth Anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. In fact, the assignment came on Constitution Day itself — the same day as Mexico’s Independence Day.

Said Brinsdon’s father: “Our kids [in America] don’t even know the [American] national anthem and here we are ... teaching them to memorize and perform the national anthem for Mexico. I just think it’s so backwards.”

The Brinsdon family’s patriotic response to what they perceive as an inappropriate imposition of an act of fidelity to a foreign government is rooted in their own experience of immigration to the United States. As KRGV reported:

Brenda points out her mother is Mexican and her grandfather Jesus Ramirez is from the Mexican city of San Luis Potosi. Her father, William Brinsdon, supports his daughter’s stand.

“We’ve been chipping away at our United States patriotism for a long, long time. This is just another chip,” Brinsdon said.

As the war between drug cartels continues to devolve Mexico into a failed state, Americans have good reason to be proud of their own national heritage — especially on Constitution Day. Constitutionalists note that the intentions of the teacher and school district aside, the imposition of a foreign anthem and oath on a day which ought to be devoted to the anthem and oath of these United States seems ill-conceived and poorly timed, at best.

Photo: The flag of Mexico



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