



Christian Voices for Life

Weekly Pro-Life

Education

Prayer

Action

This week's Topic: School Censorship of Websites



Education: Andrew Lampart, a high school student in Woodbury, CN, was trying to do research for a classroom debate on gun control. But he found that he was only able to access sites that supported gun control, and was not able to access the web sites of the National Rifle Association or the Second Amendment Foundation. It seems that high school computers were protected by a firewall, which prevents students from accessing certain web sites. That's great to prevent access to pornography and other objectionable material. But when students only have access to one side of political issues, that is a situation which borders on indoctrination. Other blocked sites included National Right to Life, the state Republican Party, the Vatican, and *Christianity Today!* Why were these sites blocked? The superintendent stated that certain political sites needed to be blocked to prevent "hate speech" from getting into the school.(1)

While some political web sites may be guilty of "hate speech", that description could certainly not be applied to National Right to Life or many other sites that were blocked. Oh, and the web sites for Planned Parenthood and NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League) were NOT blocked. This seems clearly to be an example of someone who had the power to choose what sites would be blocked using that power to further their own agenda rather than serve the intended purpose. When the superintendent did not immediately fix the problem, Lampart went to the Board of Education. The Board agreed that the student had raised an important issue, and further investigation was warranted.(1) Let's hope that action will be taken to ensure students access to all websites offering truthful information in a respectful way.

1. Dave Andrusko, "School Computer system blocks NRLC, ready access to PPFA and NARAL " National Right to Life News, June 2014 (retrieved 6/23/14 from <http://www.nationalrighttolifeneeds.org/news/2014/06/the-june-edition-on-nrl-news-is-now-available-online/#.U6hNckCwXec>)



Prayer: Dear Jesus, Please send the Holy Spirit to guide the hearts and minds of each person who is involved in deciding which web sites should be made available to students in our schools, as well as what material to put in libraries and use in classrooms. Help them to make correct and fair judgments about the content of websites, textbooks, and other resources, and help them to make their decision according to your holy will. Guide school administrators and teachers to be aware of the possibility of skewed judgments and work to ensure equal access to all legitimate web sites for their students.



Action: Pray for our school administrators and teachers to be just as they play such an important role in presenting information to our students. Ask teens you know if they have equal access to differing political views on their school computers. If there is a problem, help to correct the situation and make sure legitimate web sites are made available to the students.