

Office of the Superintendent

Manny P. Arvon II

June 30, 2014

JUL 07 2014

James B. Phares, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools
West Virginia, Department of Education
Building 6
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, WV 25303-0330

Dear Superintendent Phares:

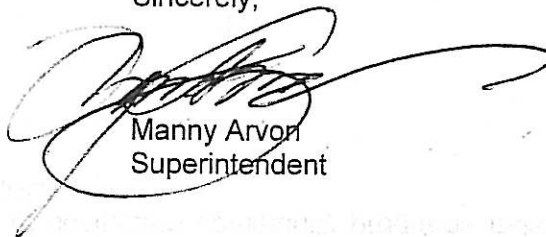
The purpose of this letter is to request an interpretation of school law involving the application of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525 to faith based programs. I have enclosed a copy of a letter from Patrick C. Elliott, Staff Attorney for the Freedom from Religion Foundation that outlines several concerns regarding certain religious practices observed in the administration of a WV Pre-K program by the New Beginnings child care facility.

As you are aware, Policy 2525 contemplates that existing community resources be maximized and that faith based early childhood program providers be included in the county collaborative early childhood core team and that they may participate as service providers.

Policy 2525 contains no provisions relating to limitations upon faith based program service providers, in terms of the exposure of children to religious activities. Section 20.1 provides that any LEA oversight of contracted community programs must be defined in the contracts for such community programs.

If it is your interpretation that the application of Policy 2525 to faith based program service providers must include contractual limitations upon religious activities please identify the specific limitations that must be included. Also, please address the concerns outlined in Mr. Elliott's letter in terms of address the existing contractual arrangement with New Beginnings. Your timely attention to this request will be appreciated. I believe it to be in the best interest of the school district to provide a prompt response to Mr. Elliott.

Sincerely,



Manny Arvon
Superintendent

Enclosures: New Beginnings Contract; May 9, 2014 letter from Mr. Elliott

cc. Patrick C. Elliott, Esquire ✓