

Opening Board Meeting With Prayer

The article from the Journal entitled “Board ends practice of opening prayer” bothered me. It gave the appearance that I voted to end open prayer during Close Session. I want to be clear that I did not. Verbal prayer is a core value. Mom would get up every morning and pray aloud for her family. It wasn’t a moment of silence. Her words carry me today.

The discussion should’ve never taken place and voted on behind closed doors. It wasn’t a lawsuit, it was a threat of a lawsuit. It is the same letter from an atheist organization that other boards received. The organization’s mission and core value is to stop any religious expressions in public and private spaces.

Again, the way this was handled gave the appearance that we all were in agreement with this decision, and because there was no open discussion and public vote, the entire process appeared less than transparent to our community.

Questions:

Why are we responding to this threat now when past boards have not responded. At what point do we fight for our own community’s core values? My understanding is that this came from one parent when there are thousands who believe the opposite. What about their perspectives?

It concerns me that a longstanding practice of WSFC-School boards in the past of praying non sectarian prayers could be eliminated tonight because of one complaint. This makes us look weak and compliant. Of course, they shroud their complaint under the guise of separation of church and state.

As a district, it feels we are starting to tamper with things that could adversely affect our Market Share causing our parents to leave our public schools and take advantage of the opportunity scholarships from our state legislators. Parents are starting to feel uneasy about the direction of our choice program and now we are tampering with a longstanding tradition of open prayer before board meetings. I am a product of WSFC-Schools-4-2-2-2 program (I attended Lewisville, Diggs, Griffith Jr.High, Anderson, Parkland; my wife and children are products of this community and its core values). I don't want our district hurt because we have compromised our core values to take on another that has no long term investment in our community.

It appears to me the topic on our agenda "Moment of Silence" is misleading based on the threat of the lawsuit it should be labeled Board Meetings and Prayer

I would like to make a motion that we continue our public non-sectarian prayers before board meetings.