

Families sue Catholic school over English only policy

WICHITA (AP) — Four Hispanic families are suing St. Anne's Catholic School over a policy that requires students to speak English at all times while at school.

The lawsuit, filed Monday, calls for an end to the policy and asks for an order barring similar policies at other diocese schools. It seeks the return of one student to the school who was allegedly kicked out for refusing to sign the "English only" pledge. And it asks for court costs and unspecified damages for discrimination and emotional suffering.

"Language is an essential characteristic of one's national origin," according to the complaint filed in the case. "The ban on Spanish at St. Anne's created an atmosphere of intimidation, inferiority and isolation for Hispanic students."

The lawsuit was filed by parents Mike and Clara Silva, Maria and Fermin Fernandez, Guadalupe Cruz-Tello and Alma Contreras on behalf of themselves and their minor children. It names as defendants St. Anne Catholic School,

Principal Margaret Nugent, St. Anne Catholic Parish and the Catholic Diocese of Wichita.

"I think if one school is granted their wish by not allowing their students to speak another language, then other schools will follow suit," Mike Silva said.

Diocese spokesman Fred Solis called the lawsuit unfortunate, saying the church has historically offered support and services to minorities and spoken out for immigrant rights.

The diocese has said the school enacted the policy in response to four students who were using Spanish to bully others and to put down teachers and administrators.

The majority of the school's 243 students are white. It has 75 Hispanic students, 27 Asian students and two who are black.

The parents claim in their lawsuit that since the school receives federal money for its free and reduced-price lunch program, it is subject to federal anti-discrimination laws. The district contends it is the students who receive the

federal funding.

The students named in the lawsuit are bilingual U.S. citizens with no disciplinary records, court documents contend.

Lawyers for the Hispanic families contend bullying was not the initial reason the school enacted the policy, citing a letter the school sent saying that the more students are immersed in the English language the better their chance for improvement and success.

"One real problem that I think the plaintiffs have with the policy is not just that it's a bad policy, but that the justification keeps changing," said Christopher M. McHugh, an attorney for the families. "When one doesn't work, you move on to the next reason."

In a letter to the families' lawyer, diocese attorney Jay Fowler suggested the lawsuit would become a divisive issue for the community.

"The politicization of what basically is a disagreement between a parent and a school will most likely morph into an anti-immigrant sentiment, thereby undermining the effects of both our clients," he wrote.

Mingo Bible Church to have Bible school June 13-14

"Amazon Expedition" will be the theme of a Vacation Bible School June 13-14 at Mingo Bible Church in Mingo.

Kids will journey through the wild Amazon, learning of its beauty, wonder and dangers. This VBS was developed by Answers in Genesis, and is

intended to help kids learn what the Bible says about the "7 C's of history": creation, corruption, catastrophe, confusion, Christ, cross and consummation. Lots of games, crafts, snacks and fun activities are planned.

The school will be held 6-8:45 p.m. Friday, June 13, and continues at 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Saturday,

June 14 at Mingo Bible Church. Saturday lunch will be provided. Kids currently 4 years old through those entering 5th grade in fall 2008 are invited to attend. For more information or to pre-register for the "Amazon Expedition" VBS at Mingo Bible Church, contact 785-460-7530.

Seizure of polygamist sect kids thrown out

SAN ANGELO (AP) — An appellate court decision upended the custody case that sent more than 440 children from a polygamist sect's ranch into foster care, but it's not clear whether the children might soon return home.

The Third Court of Appeals in Austin said the state failed to show the youngsters were in any immediate danger, the only grounds under Texas law for taking children from their parents without court action.

Texas District Judge Barbara Walther now has 10 days to release the youngsters from custody, but the state could appeal to the Texas Supreme Court and keep the children from immediately going back to their parents.

The decision Thursday in one of the biggest child-custody cases in U.S. history was a humiliating defeat for the state Child Protective Services agency. It was hailed as vindication by members of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who claim they are being persecuted

for their religious beliefs.

"It's a great day for Texas justice. This was the right decision," said Julie Balovich, a Legal Aid attorney for some of the parents. She was joined by several smiling mothers who declined to comment at a news conference outside the courthouse.

Sect elder Willie Jessop said the parents were elated, but added, "There will be no celebrations until some little children are getting hugs from their parents." He said his faith in the legal system will be restored "when I see the schoolyard full of children."

Every child at the Yearning For Zion Ranch in Eldorado was taken into custody more than six weeks ago after someone called a hot line claiming to be a pregnant, abused teenage wife. The girl has not been found and authorities are investigating whether the calls were a hoax. Child-protection officials argued that five girls at the ranch had become pregnant at 15 and 16 and that the sect pushed underage girls into marriage and sex.

Colby church to have revival

Colby Independent Baptist Church invites everyone to revival services from June 1-6.

June 1 services will be Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. Services will be at 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday services will be at 7 p.m. each night.

Guest preacher is Alva Blankenship from Canvas, W.V. Blankenship is a dynamic and practical preacher. He served as a pastor for 13 years, a Christian educator and now an evangelist preaching across America and in six countries.

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SHARE the FAITH



Worship in the church of your choice this weekend.

COLLEGE VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH, Pastor Tom Huffman, 1185 Wheatridge Rd. at College Drive, 460-7144, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship services, 10:45 a.m.

Schedule of church services

COLBY INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH, 730 E. 3rd (former Jaycee's building), Pastor Bernard Heinz, 460-0313, Sunday School 9:30 a.m.; Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.; Sunday Evening 6:00 p.m.; Wednesday Evening 7:00 p.m.

ASCENSION-ON-THE-PRAIRIE EPISCOPAL, Rev. Don Martin, College Drive & Wheatridge Rd., 462-3041, Holy Eucharist, 9:00 a.m. every Sunday, Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m. Wednesday, September through May, Christian Education for Youth, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, September through May

COLLEGE DRIVE ASSEMBLY OF GOD, Pastor, Jeremy Gundling, 245 W. College Dr. - 462-8234, Early Service - 8:00 a.m.; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m.

BEREAN CHURCH, 1000 S. Franklin, 460-2763, www.colbyborean.com; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. Awana Clubs, Wednesday, 7 p.m., Middle & High School, Wednesday, 7 p.m. @ the Heartland Christian School Gym

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, (Affiliated with American Baptist Churches USA) Carroll H. Morony, Pastor, 615 W. Webster, 462-2867. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.; Family Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday evening: 7:00 p.m.; Wednesday Bible Study: 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.; RC Club: 2nd & 4th Sunday: 2:00 p.m.

COLLEGE VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH, Pastor Tom Huffman, 1185 Wheatridge Rd. at College Drive, 460-7144, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship services, 10:45 a.m.

MINGO BIBLE CHURCH, 420 Main Mingo, 785-462-2992: An independent community church served by Village Missions Intern Pastor Pat Colley. Sunday School: 9:30AM - all ages. Sunday Services: 10:45AM. Sunday Nights: 1st Sunday of the month: potluck following morning service - no evening service; 2nd Sunday: services at 6:30 PM; 3rd Sunday: informal fellowship - bring a snack to share!; 4th and 5th Sunday: services at 6:30 p.m.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC, 462-2179, Father Dana Clark, Pastor, Saturday Eve. Mass 5:30 p.m., Sunday Masses 8:00 & 10:00 a.m., Confessions will be heard Saturday 4:30-5:05 p.m. and from 7:30-7:45 a.m. and 9:25-9:40 a.m. on Sunday.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Rev. Carol Rahn, 515 W. 4th, 462-6342, Worship, 9:00 a.m.; Adult Sunday school, following worship.; Sept. thru May: Kid's Club for kids age 3-5th grade meets first Wednesday of the month from 5:15-6:45 p.m.; Youth Group for 6th-9th grade meets the first Wednesday of the month 6:30-8:00 p.m., and the second Wednesday 7:00-8:00 p.m.

WESLEYAN CHURCH, 320 W. Pine - 462-8391, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:40 a.m., Sunday Evening Cell groups at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday Youth Ministries, Kids Clubhouse 7 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 1145 S. Franklin - 460-6605, President Gary Slavens, 460-2656; Rocky Robbins, 1st counselor, 460-1101; Tim Wilson, 2nd counselor, 785-846-7796. Sacrament meeting 10 a.m., Sunday School and Primary 11:20 a.m., Priesthood, Relief Society, YM/YW, 12:10 p.m.; Family History Center open to public, 7-9 p.m. Thursdays or by appointment. Call 462-3571.

COLBY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, Rev. James Mardock, pastor, 950 S. Franklin, 460-6521, Sunday Worship Services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m., Fellowship coffee 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., KXXX broadcasts 11:00 worship. www.colbyumc.org

REDEEMING LOVE MINISTRIES, INC., 345 N. Franklin, Dr. W.G. and Rev. Orvella Romine, Equipping Class, Sunday, 10a.m., Sunday worship, 11a.m., Wednesday, R.L.M Training Centers (Bible School), 5 p.m. Shop online at: www.rlmregionalchurch.com

CHURCH OF CHRIST, 510 E. 4th, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday Eve. Worship 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

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