THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT



THE JESUS CLUBS

WHAT IS IT?

THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT WAS PUT INTO LAW IN 1984. THIS LAW PROTECTS STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS ARE GIVEN THE SAME RIGHTS OR ACCESS IN LEADING NON-CURRICULAR CLUBS ON CAMPUS. SCHOOL FUNDING IS DEPENDENT ON BEING IN COMPLIANCE OF THIS LAW.

THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT IS IMPORTANT FOR JESUS CLUB STUDENT LEADERS AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO KNOW ABOUT AS IT PROVIDES ASSURANCE THAT THERE IS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & LEGAL COVERING AT 7-12TH GRADE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE USA. STUDENTS ARE THE KEY TO THEIR CAMPUS AND HAVE PERMISSION TO UNASHAMEDLY SHARE THEIR FAITH AT SCHOOL! THIS ACT ALSO ADDRESSES THE INVOLVEMENT OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND MORE INFO?

YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT USING THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

https://firstliberty.org/publicschoolkit/

https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/groupsguide.doc#:~:text=The%20Equal%20Access%20Act%20ensures,other%2C%20similarly%20situated%20student%20groups.

https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title20/chapter52/subchapter8&edition=prelim#:~:text=It%20shall%20be%20unlawful%20for,basis%20of%20the%20religious%2C%20political%2C \

https://www.aclu-wa.org/sites/default/files/media-legacy/attachments/Equal%20Access%20Act%20FAQs.pdf



WHAT DOES IT SAY/MEAN?

THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT:

1. IDENTIFIES LUNCH AS AN ACCEPTABLE TIME FOR NONCURRICULAR CLUBS TO MEET.

2. GIVES ALL STUDENTS THE SAME RIGHTS/ACCESS FOR THEIR CLUB. THIS MEANS IF ANOTHER NONCURRICULAR CLUB IS ALLOWED TO MEET AT LUNCH, THE JESUS CLUBS MUST LEGALLY BE ALLOWED TO MEET AT LUNCH AS WELL. IF ANOTHER CLUB IS ALLOWED TO HAVE FOOD, THE JESUS CLUB MUST LEGALLY BE ALLOWED TO HAVE FOOD AT THEIR CLUB. IF ANY OTHER NONCURRICULAR CLUB IS ALLOWED TO HAVE AN ADVOCATE OR GUEST SPEAKER COME, THE JESUS CLUBS MUST BE ALLOWED TO HAVE AN ADVOCATE OR GUEST SPEAKER COME.

3. STATES THAT ADULT VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE “REGULAR” PRESENCE IN A CLUB - THE UNDERSTANDING OF “REGULAR” IS UP TO THE INTERPRETATION OF EACH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUT ACCORDING THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT, THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS MUST IMPLEMENT THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THIS LAW EQUALLY WITH EACH NONCURRICULAR CLUB. THIS MEANS IF THEY ALLOW ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO HELP IN ONE CLUB ON A WEEKLY BASIS, THEY MUST ALLOW THE JESUS CLUB ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO COME AT THE SAME FREQUENCY.

*IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT BY ALLOWING A JESUS CLUB AT YOUR SCHOOL, YOUR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ARE NOT ENDORSING THE CLUB BUT RATHER ALLOWING THE CLUB BASED ON GRANTING EQUAL ACCESS TO STUDENTS.



WHAT IF MY RIGHTS ARE BEING INFRINGED UPON?

IF YOU FEEL YOUR RIGHTS ARE BEING INFRINGED UPON, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO MEET WITH YOUR TEACHER ADVISOR, OR A TEACHER YOU TRUST IF YOU DON'T HAVE A TEACHER ADVISOR YET, AS YOUR FIRST COURSE OF ACTION. WHEN MEETING WITH THIS TEACHER, SHARE THAT YOU FEEL YOUR RIGHTS ARE BEING INFRINGED UPON BASED ON THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT AND ASK IF THEY WILL HELP YOU HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR(S).

WHEN YOU MEET WITH YOUR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR(S), WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO COME IN KIND AND CALM. STATE HOW YOU ARE AWARE THERE IS A LAW CALLED THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT AND THAT BASED ON THIS LAW, YOU FEEL YOUR RIGHTS ARE BEING INFRINGED UPON. BE PREPARED TO SHARE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF WHAT OTHER CLUBS ARE BEING ALLOWED TO DO BUT YOU ARE NOT. ASK THEM TO REMEDY THIS SO THAT YOUR CLUB, OR THE CLUB YOU ARE TRYING TO GET APPROVED, IS BEING AFFORDED THE SAME RIGHTS AS THE OTHER NONCURRICULAR CLUBS AT YOUR SCHOOL. ASK IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU NEED TO DO TO BE IN COMPLIANCE OF THE SCHOOL RULES AS WELL.



WHAT IF YOU ATTEND A PRIVATE/CHARTER SCHOOL OR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE USA OR A SCHOOL OUTSIDE OF THE USA?

IF YOU ATTEND A SCHOOL WHERE THE EQUAL ACCESS ACT IS NOT IN EFFECT, ASK A TRUSTED TEACHER, A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE FROM THE FRONT OFFICE, OR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR WHAT THE RULE ARE REGARDING STUDENT-LED CLUBS ON YOUR CAMPUS AND WHAT YOU NEED TO DO TO LAUNCH A FAITH-BASED CLUB AT YOUR SCHOOL.

