

A Parent's Rights Don't End at the School Parking Lot



Victoria Cobb, President

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This summer brought an unprecedented wave of parents fighting back against efforts to politicize and sexualize their children's schools—and we've got some key updates for you on how to stay engaged on what may still be coming down the pipeline into your schools. But first, I want to give a huge, heartfelt "THANK YOU!" to all the courageous parents, citizens, pastors and church members who showed up at their local school board meetings; emailed or called their school officials—and who supported and put into action our #ProtectEveryKid initiative in their communities. Your voices *did* make a difference; Let me explain how:



Multiple School Boards Rebel

As soon as the General Assembly and Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) launched their aggressive efforts to force every single K-12 school in Virginia to embrace an extreme, radicalized form of transgender advocacy (through the so-called "[Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students](#)") into every part of school life, we knew it was going to be

a battle like no other to mobilize and empower concerned parents. We recognized immediately that these policies presented some of the most significant threats to student privacy, freedom of speech, and parental authority we'd ever seen—and we just couldn't allow them to be rubber-stamped in every district without raising the alarm that we need to fairly and equally protect every student!

The good news is, thousands of Virginians responded to the alarm and your voices had an impact beyond our initial expectations: At the time of this writing, nearly 20 school boards have either decided to reject the VDOE's transgender-issue policy mandate, replace it with their own policy or resolution, or decline to take action on it. That includes counties such as *Russell, Buchanan, Bedford, Campbell, Chesapeake, Highland, Louisa, Washington, and Augusta*, and many more. Considering the intense amount of defunding threats and intimidation efforts coming against these school board members, this demonstrates the power of concerned citizens speaking up.

The Russell County School Board fired one of the most powerful "first shots for parental rights," sending a ripple affect throughout the state after they voted on July 15 to completely reject the policy and instead adopted a resolution strongly reaffirming parental rights and stating that existing policies already protect every child.

And while other districts like the Loudoun County school board stubbornly ignored parental concerns, passing the controversial "transgender and gender expansive" policy, we were still able to make multiple trips to help come alongside parents at local rallies and equip them to testify. Courageous parents and teachers, like Tanner Cross, also helped bring national attention to the dangerous school curricula and policies being forced on families.

Your Voices Generate National News Coverage

Your efforts to spread the word about our Protect Every Kid campaign and accompanying tools to equip school board members and families helped generate a national wave of media coverage. Here's just a quick a sampling, keeping in mind that outlets like *The Epoch Times* and *Breitbart* reach more than 7 million people!

- Breitbart: [Virginia School Board Unanimously Rejects Critical Race Theory And State Mandated Transgender Policy](#)
- CBN: [School Board Says It's Protecting All Students and Parents in Vote on Virginia's New Transgender Student Policy](#)
- Fox News affiliates: [Transgender Student Policy Vote Postponed After Dozens Speak at Loudoun meeting](#)
- The Epoch Times: [Parents Protest Ahead of Transgender Policy Adoption ...](#)

Another Outcome-The AG's Cards Revealed: Another development that increased the ripple effect was the outcome of our legal team's lawsuit against the VDOE. Though the judge dismissed the lawsuit, there was an unexpected silver lining: Many school board members were repeatedly told that they had no choice but to adopt the VDOE policy because "it's the law." However, as a result of the [Founding Freedom Law Center's lawsuit](#) against the VDOE, school boards now know that 1) these are merely guidance policies that local school boards cannot be forced to adopt; and 2) school boards will not lose state funding if they reject the Model Policies. According to the [Courthouse News Service](#), during the court hearing, the Virginia Attorney General's legal representative stated that "any fears about the state's Department of Education ever coming after school boards for failing to follow the policies were misguided. Instead she noted there's no enforcement mechanism within the model policy statute, meaning there's no punishment for a school board if they fail to pass inclusive

policies as the model policy document guides. 'Will the state come after a school board's funding if they don't pass these policies?' [Judge] Watson asked. 'No,' she responded."

The Battle Continues-What You Can Do!

Despite the fact that the many school boards have resisted, far too many are still ignoring parents' concerns. That means many of these transgender-advocacy components will likely be finding their way into classroom curriculum and policies over the next few months. So it's important to stay alert, keep your eye on school board actions and be aware of what's happening in the classrooms. To help equip you, The Founding Freedoms Law Center now has a [Parental Opt-Out Notice](#) for "LGBTQ+" Curriculum in Virginia Schools for parents to give to school administrators.

Stay tuned in the next few weeks as we unveil more tools like this to help. Again, to every mom, dad, grandparent, and citizen who stood with us to speak out against these harmful policies, we are incredibly thankful. But we encourage you to not give up the battle over the hearts, minds, and bodies of our children. Keep heart and have hope, as we continue to #ProtectEveryKid!