

# CENSORING VATICAN WEBSITE CANNOT STAND



Bill Donohue comments on the response by Jody Ian Goeler, Superintendent of Schools for Regional School District 14 in Connecticut, to accusations that the Vatican website has been blocked in district schools

because it promotes “hate speech”:

Yesterday afternoon, I asked Superintendent Goeler to “please identify examples of ‘hate speech’ found on the Vatican’s website.” He responded last night saying that he never “stated or implied anywhere that the Vatican website promotes or has examples of hate speech.” This resolves nothing. In a public letter released today, Goeler admits that access is provided to liberal websites, but not conservative ones. Nowhere does he address the issue of censoring the Vatican (Islamic sites are okay).

Goeler would have us believe that some kind of technological glitch is at work; he is asking the filtering service provider, Dell SonicWALL, for an explanation. But this condition is not a technological fluke—it is the work of a left-wing ideologue. Goeler’s big mistake was to state his tolerance for intolerance. “The district is trying to determine the reason for the inconsistency and *if bias is pervasive enough to justify switching to another content filtering provider.*” (My italics.)

I spent 20 years in education, 16 as a professor, and I cannot believe that any seasoned educator would make such a remarkable comment. Goeler would have us believe that before he can rule on this matter, he needs to know if the “bias is

pervasive enough to justify switching.” Just how many websites of a “conservative”–or for that matter a “liberal”–nature have to be blocked to merit a change? And how many Catholic websites have to be censored before action is taken? The man is not suitable to work in education.

We are taking this issue to Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of the State Department of Education in Connecticut. This is a serious matter. Abridging the First Amendment can only be allowed when there is some competing interest of overriding importance. Stopping students from accessing the Vatican’s website is not one of them.

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