

NYC PRINCIPAL FORCED TO REVERSE DISCRIMINATORY MEMO

A New York City principal, Dr. Fran Levy, came under fire from the Catholic League when she discriminated against Christians. By putting the media spotlight on Levy, principal of PS 22 (The Thomas Jefferson Magnet School of Humanities in Flushing), we were able to force her to reverse her decision that allowed teachers to bring Jewish and Muslim religious symbols to work yet banned the display of a Christmas tree.

We received a tip from a Catholic League member who worked at the school that on November 29, Dr. Levy ordered a three-foot Christmas tree taken down because it was larger than a cutout display of a menorah and the crescent and star. On November 30, Levy issued a memo inviting teachers to bring to school religious symbols that represent the Muslim, Kwanzaa and Jewish religions. (Kwanzaa, however, is not a religion.) No mention of Christianity was made.

It was the following news release that garnered quick coverage by the media:

“Dr. Levy has issued a memo that is mind-boggling. She has set her school up for a lawsuit. It would be hard to find a more classic demonstration of discrimination against Christians in a public school anywhere in the nation.

“The Catholic League will not be appeased if Dr. Levy decides to put back the Christmas tree. The Christmas tree is a secular symbol. If she is going to allow religious symbols such as a menorah and crescent and star, then she must permit the display of a nativity scene. Either that or ban all religious symbols. But we will not tolerate a discriminatory policy and that is why we will use all our resources to correct this injustice.”

We didn't have to expend many resources to get what we wanted. Dr. Levy came under such pressure that she had to reverse her decision allowing the religious symbols of Judaism and Islam in her school. But that didn't satisfy William Donohue.

Donohue registered a complaint with the attorneys who work in the New York City Schools Chancellor's office. He demanded that disciplinary action be taken against Dr. Levy for discriminating against Christians. A spokeswoman for the chancellor's office said that Donohue's complaint would be given serious consideration.