

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL BANS EASTER BUNNY

William Rearick, Schools Superintendent of the Tiverton Public Schools in Rhode Island, banned the Easter Bunny from appearing at a March 24 fundraising event at the Tiverton Middle School. He also banned the word “Easter” from all school events.

He told the *Providence Journal* that during the last year and a half, he has become more aware of folks who don’t have a Christian background.” Taking the place of the Easter Bunny was Peter Rabbit; children were able to get their picture taken with him.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented on this the day before the fundraising event:

“I am astonished that Schools Superintendent Rearick only recently discovered Jews and Muslims. But better late than never. However, it was not a Jew or a Muslim who complained about the Easter Bunny—it was an ex-Catholic, Michael Burk; he is vice chairman of the school committee. No matter, I have news for Superintendent Rearick: he has not resolved the problem.

“It is unconscionable that in this day and age Superintendent Rearick would choose to honor a thief. As every schoolchild knows, Peter Rabbit stole from Mr. McGregor’s garden. To now hold him up as a role model to impressionable youngsters sends the wrong signal. At the very least, grief counselors should be dispatched to tomorrow’s event.

“There is also a more serious matter going on. The event smacks of sexism: Peter Rabbit had three sisters—Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail—and there is no historical record of them ever having committed a crime. So why were they passed over? Looks

like the glass ceiling is still in place.”

Donohue urged League members to register their outrage by contacting Rearick. “Tell him to bring the Easter Bunny back,” said Donohue, “as only ex-Catholics are likely to be offended.” Rearick told the *Warren Times Gazette* on March 30 that he received about 280 emails, “all from the Catholic League.”