



# CATHOLIC LEAGUE

*For Religious  
and  
Civil Rights*

## *Board of Advisors*

Hadley Arkes  
Brent Bozell  
Gerard Bradley  
Linda Chavez  
Robert Destro  
Keith Fournier  
Laura Garcia  
Robert George  
Mary Ann Glendon  
Dolores Grier  
Alan Keyes  
Stephen Krason  
Lawrence Kudlow  
Robert Lockwood  
Thomas Monaghan  
Michael Novak  
Kate O'Beirne  
Thomas Reeves  
Patrick Riley  
Robert Royal  
Ronald Rychlak  
Russell Shaw  
William Simon, Jr.  
Joseph Varacalli  
Paul Vitz  
George Weigel

## *Chairman*

*Board of Directors*  
Rev. Philip Eichner

## *Board of Directors*

Raymond Arroyo  
Candace de Russey  
Richard Kerins  
Walter Knysz, Jr.  
Leonard Oswald  
Francis Schroeder  
John Spellman  
Joe Thompson  
Theodore Vargas  
Richard Walawender

## *Vice President*

Bernadette Brady

## *President*

William Donohue

December 17, 2015

Mr. Thomas Salyer  
Johnson County Superintendent of Schools  
253 North Mayo Trail  
Paintsville, KY 41240

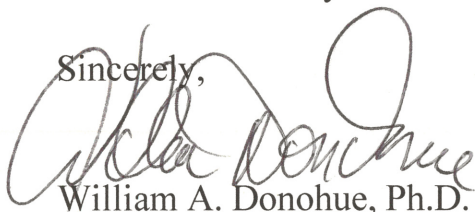
Dear Mr. Salyer:

I read with interest your decision, based on the advice of school district attorneys, to censor "A Charlie Brown Christmas" from one of your elementary schools; other schools in your district have also been asked to remove all religious references from their upcoming Christmas productions.

Your message on the district's website says you made this decision "in accordance with federal laws." In fact, there is nothing in federal law that mandates this censorial approach. While the U.S. Supreme Court has not ruled definitively on this subject, it let stand a 1980 decision by the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit that conditionally allowed for Christmas assemblies with religious themes (See *Florey v. Sioux Falls*; it is enclosed). Pursuant to this ruling, the Sioux Falls School District allowed Christmas performances of a religious nature to be performed provided they were presented "in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday." To this day, *Florey* remains the controlling ruling on this subject, thus paving the way for you to allow these Christmas events.

Please reconsider your decision.

Sincerely,



William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President