



PRESS RELEASES >

Supreme Court to Hear Oklahoma Case Involving Nation's First Religious Public Charter School

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Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the
American Civil Liberties Union, Education Law Center, and

Freedom From Religion Foundation issued the following statement concerning the petitions for certiorari [granted today](#) by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Oklahoma Statewide Virtual Charter School Board v. Drummond* and *St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual School v. Drummond*. The organizations represent faith leaders, public school parents, and public education advocates in a separate lawsuit to stop Oklahoma from sponsoring and funding St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual School.

“The law is clear: Charter schools are public schools and must be secular and open to all students. The Oklahoma Supreme Court correctly found that the state’s approval of a religious public charter school was unlawful and unconstitutional. We urge the U.S. Supreme Court to affirm that ruling and safeguard public education, church-state separation, and religious freedom for all. Oklahoma taxpayers, including our plaintiffs, should not be forced to fund a religious public school that plans to discriminate against students and staff and indoctrinate students into one religion. Converting public schools into Sunday schools would be a dangerous sea change for our democracy.”

AU, the ACLU, ELC, and FFRF, with support from Oklahoma-based counsel Odom & Sparks PLLC and J. Douglas Mann, represent Oklahomans who object to their tax dollars funding a religious public charter school that will discriminate against students and employees based on their religion and LGBTQ+ status, won’t commit to adequately serving students with disabilities, and will indoctrinate students into one religion. These nine Oklahomans and OKPLAC, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting public education, filed

their [lawsuit](#), *OKPLAC, Inc. v. Statewide Virtual Charter School Board*, on July 31, 2023, in the District Court of Oklahoma County.

Following the June 2024 Oklahoma Supreme Court decision in *Drummond v. OSVCSB*, the *OKPLAC* plaintiffs and defendants reached a court-approved agreement to put the *OKPLAC* case on hold until at least Feb. 1, 2025, while developments in the *Drummond* case are pending. St. Isidore agreed not to accept charter-school funding from the state or open to students as a charter school during the 2024-25 school year as part of that agreement.

The plaintiffs in the *OKPLAC* case include the Oklahoma Parent Legislative Advocacy Coalition, Melissa Abdo, Krystal Bonsall, Leslie Briggs, Brenda Lené, Michele Medley, Dr. Bruce Prescott, the Rev. Dr. Mitch Randall, the Rev. Dr. Lori Walke, and Erika Wright.

The team of attorneys that represents the plaintiffs is led by Alex J. Luchenitser of Americans United and includes Jenny Samuels of Americans United; Daniel Mach and Heather L. Weaver of the ACLU; Robert Kim, Jessica Levin, and Wendy Lecker of Education Law Center; Patrick Elliott of FFRF; Benjamin H. Odom, John H. Sparks, Michael W. Ridgeway, and Lisa M. Mason of Odom & Sparks; and J. Douglas Mann.

Learn More About the Issues in This