**WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND THE CASE?**

The New York State Board of Regents authorized a short, voluntary prayer for recitation at the start of each school day. A group of organizations joined forces in challenging the prayer, claiming that it violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The New York Court of Appeals rejected their arguments.

Herricks School District held voluntary prayers and the parents did not like these prayers.

**HOW DID THE SUPREME COURT RULE IN THE CASE?**

Justice Douglas concurred in the judgment on the ground that the state's financing a religious exercise violated the First Amendment.

Justice Stewart dissented, arguing that no "official religion" was established by permitting those who want to say a prayer to say it.

It was unconstitutional for public schools to lead students in prayer

**NAME OF CASE**

Engel v. Vitale

**YEAR OF CASE**

**1962**

**INVOLVED (ex. people, states, amendments, laws)**

Herricks School District, Steven Engel, William Vitale, First Amendment, Establishment of Religion Clause, Warren Court, Hugo Black

**WHAT IS THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE IN THIS CASE?**

Should schools be able to read a prayer at the start of the day? Does this violate the “establishment of religion” clause in the First Amendment.