



News Release

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School to Appeal Court Decision Prohibiting Prayer Over Loudspeaker at State Championship Football Game

First Liberty Institute attorneys planning appeal on behalf of Cambridge Christian School

Tampa, FL—Today, the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida issued a decision affirming a Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) rule prohibiting two Christian schools from praying over the loudspeaker prior to a state championship game. Attorneys for Cambridge Christian School plan to appeal today’s decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

“By allowing the FHSAA to treat prayer differently from non-religious messages the court is telling high school kids that prayer in public is wrong,” said Jeremy Dys, Special Counsel for Litigation and Communications for First Liberty. “We hope the Eleventh Circuit will see this decision for what it is: an assault on the First Amendment and the censorship of religious speech.”

Today’s decision came nearly three years after the Eleventh Circuit ruled that Cambridge Christian School’s argument that its free speech and free exercise rights were violated have merit and should proceed.

In 2015, the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) forbade First Liberty Institute client Cambridge Christian School (CCS) from praying over the loudspeaker at the Citrus Bowl ahead of the state championship football game. The FHSAA suggested that because the stadium was city-owned and the FHSAA a state agency, it would violate the Constitution to allow two private Christian schools to pray over a state-owned microphone for less than a minute.

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About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](http://www.firstliberty.org) is a non-profit public interest law firm and the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

To arrange an interview, contact Lacey McNeil at media@firstliberty.org or by calling 972-941-4453.