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**2013** - Riverside Public School District in Arkansas cancels its sixth grade graduation ceremony after a parent, with backing from the ACLU, asks administrators to remove a Christian prayer from the opening address. Administrators decline to change the program and cancel it instead. Other parents arrange an alternative ceremony at a local church.

**2012** - Arizona governor Jan Brewer signs a law on April 17 requiring the state board of education to design an elective course for high school students, "The Bible and Its Influence on Western Culture." Arizona joins five other states (Georgia, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and South Carolina) in allowing such courses.

**2012** - The Supreme Court lets stand a Ninth Circuit ruling in support of a school district's order that a math teacher remove banners stating "In God We Trust" and "God Shed His Grace on Thee" from his classroom.

**2012** - On April 10, Tennessee governor Bill Haslam allows HB 368 to become law without his signature. The measure is dubbed the "monkey bill" by critics who charge that it opens the door to presenting creationism and other anti-science viewpoints under the guise of critical thinking.

**2012** - In March, Florida governor Rick Scott signs a bill allowing school districts to adopt policies allowing students to deliver "inspirational messages" at school assemblies. Critics claim that the law, slated to take effect July 1, is unconstitutional and is liable to lead to costly litigation for schools that implement such policies.

**2011** - In Seattle, Washington, a high school student reports that while volunteering at a public elementary school she was told to rename Easter eggs "spring spheres."

**2010** - In October, the Supreme Court declines to hear *Association of Christian Schools International et al. v. Roman Stearns et al.*, allowing the lower courts' rulings in favor of the University of California. The plaintiffs had challenged the University of California's determination that the Christian schools' coursework, particularly creationist biology textbooks, were inconsistent with college preparatory work.

**2010** - In July, the Liberty Counsel files suit against the the Collier County (Florida) School Board in an effort to overturn a ban on distributing free Bibles to students on public school campuses for Religious Freedom Day.

**2010** - In May, the Texas State Board of Education adopts a new curriculum for social studies and history. The curriculum is widely criticized for downplaying the separation of church and state, promoting the idea of the country as a Christian nation, and making other changes favored by Christian conservatives on the board.

**2009** - In June, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals upholds the lower court ruling in *Busch v. Marple Newton School District*, finding that the school district did not violate a parent's First Amendment rights when it prohibited her from reading the Bible to a kindergarten class.

**2008** - In May, a federal judge issues an injunction in the case of *Krestan v. Deer Valley Unified School District* and in August the parties agree to a settlement in the case. The plaintiffs claimed that the school district violated the

Equal Access Act by not allowing a student Christian group to make announcements over the Mountain Ridge High School's public address system.

**2007** - In Brooklyn, New York, the Khalil Gibran International Academy becomes the first public school in the United States to emphasize Arabic language and culture. The opening of the school has drawn criticism from those who believe the school will inevitably teach Islam, thereby eliminating a divide between church and state.

**2007** - In Hollywood, Florida, Ben Gamla Charter School becomes the first Hebrew-English charter school in the United States. The school remains controversial, as critics believe that the public school will inherently promote Judaism in its teaching of Hebrew and Jewish culture.

**2007** - The University of Michigan-Dearborn installs footbaths in bathrooms to accommodate Muslim students, who wash their feet as part of ritual ablution before praying five times a day. The university maintains the footbaths were necessary health and safety measures to avoid water spills on the floor, but the decision has been criticized as an unconstitutional government endorsement of religion.

**2005** - On December 20, a Pennsylvania district court rules on *Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District*. The court declares that the school board's requirement that teachers read a disclaimer stating that evolution is only a theory and suggesting an intelligent design textbook is unconstitutional because it promotes religious doctrine.

**2001** - In June, the Supreme Court rules in the case of *Good News Club v. Milford Central School* that public schools must allow religious groups after-school access to school grounds on the same basis as other groups. The ruling extends the Court's First Amendment-based "neutrality principle" to elementary schools, thus rejecting arguments that young children need special consideration to protect them from confusing official endorsement and equal access.

**1998** - Ruling in *Peck v. Upshur County Board of Education*, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals finds that a school board policy allowing the distribution of Bibles to students by placing them on an unattended table one day during the year does not violate the Establishment Clause.

**1994** - In *Peloza v. Capistrano School District*, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals rules that requiring a teacher to teach evolution does not violate his First Amendment right to freedom of religion because evolution is not a religion.

**1992** - In *Lee v. Weisman*, the Supreme Court rules that prayer during school graduation violates the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

**1985** - In *Wallace v. Jaffee*, the Supreme Court rules that an Alabama law requiring a moment of silent meditation or prayer in public schools is unconstitutional.

**1974** - In June, the U.S. Supreme Court refuses to hear *Wright v. Houston Independent School District*. The case, which was dismissed by the lower courts, had challenged the school district's policy of teaching only evolution on the grounds that the policy promoted secularism and disparaged religious belief.

**1971** - Supreme Court case *Lemon v. Kurtzman* establishes a three-pronged test (called the "Lemon test") which determines if a statute violates the Establishment Clause.

**1968** - In *Epperson v. Arkansas*, the Supreme Court decides that an Arkansas law prohibiting the teaching of

evolution violates the Establishment Clause and prohibits the free exercise of religion.

**1963** - In *Abington Township v. Schempp*, policy requiring students to participate in Bible readings in public schools is ruled unconstitutional.

**1962** - In *Engel v. Vitale*, the Supreme Court makes a landmark decision which determines that prayer in public schools is unconstitutional.

**1948** - In *McCullum v. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court rules that religious instruction in public schools is a violation of the Establishment Clause under the First Amendment.

**1943** - In *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, the Supreme Court rules that the school district violated the rights of Jehovah's Witness students by forcing them to salute the American flag.

**1925** - The Scopes Monkey Trial tests a Tennessee law that prohibits public schools from teaching the theory of evolution.

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