



# PRESS RELEASE

15250 Avenue of Science n San Diego n California 92128-3406  
Phone (858) 521-2700 n FAX (858) 485-1075

---

**For Immediate Release**  
September 13, 2011

**Contact:** Jack Sleeth, Stutz Artiano Shinoff & Holtz  
(619) 232-3122  
John P. Collins, PUSD Superintendent

## **Poway Unified School District Prevails in Teacher Suit over Classroom Banner**

In a unanimous 3-0 decision, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has found in favor of the Poway Unified School District in the suit brought in 2007 by Brad Johnson, a district high school math teacher, who had been directed by the District to remove large banners which proclaimed "God" and "Creator" from his classroom walls.

Reversing the decision by a lower court judge, the unanimous Court of Appeals decision states, "we further conclude that the school district did not violate Johnson's rights under either the Establishment or Equal Protection clauses of the United States Constitution." PUSD Superintendent John Collins said, "The forty-page written decision, which included photographs of the actual banners, is very consistent with the legal and educational rationale the District has used since the very beginning of this case. We are pleased with the outcome after more than four years in the courts."

The District is awaiting further guidance from the Court of Appeals and the lower district court regarding next steps and the timing of enforcing the Court's order.

PUSD Board President Penny Ranftle said, "We acknowledge that the United States legal process has several levels of appeal, including the Supreme Court, but the District is hoping to move forward without further calls on our limited resources in defending this lawsuit brought against the District."

###