

Plans to teach Johnny Islam challenged

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A Christian legal group will represent citizens opposed to the planned launch of a publicly funded academy in New York City where students will be immersed in Islamic culture.

Khalil Gibran International Academy features several Islamist imams on its board of advisers, as well as other promoters with connections to militant Islamic groups, according to the Thomas More Law Center.

"This proposed public school is nothing more than an incubator for the radicalization that leads to terrorism, as an NYPD Intelligence Report warned Americans just two weeks ago," said Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel for legal group.

"Rather than use the public school system to assimilate Muslims and other immigrants into American culture, New York City is doing everything it can to keep them isolated – a target rich environment for recruiting potential new homegrown terrorists and a recipe for a future 9/11 disaster, according to my read of the NYPD Report," he said.

"As uncomfortable as it makes one feel, we must understand that the political goal of radical Islam is to destroy our Judeo-Christian culture. And the KGIA is a Trojan Horse New York City is building for radical Islam with taxpayer money. That the Quran calls for Muslims to subjugate the world, especially Christians and Jews, is a fact that anyone can look up," Thompson continued.

"New York City School Chancellor Joel Klein, who is aggressively promoting this Islamic school, is the same person who refused to allow two Christian students, a second and a fourth-grader, to display a nativity scene during Christmas – another example of how political correctness is leading to a malicious double standard when it comes to religious expression in public schools," Thompson said.

The school already has had a battle with the public over comments made by its now-departed first principal. Dabah Almontaser had shared office space with an Islamist group that sold T-shirts encouraging New York Muslims to join an "intifada," or struggle, the term used by Palestinians to describe their battle with Israel.

She resigned after initially defending the T-shirts.

But other questions remain. A Brooklyn teacher who runs the "Stop the Madrassa" organization said the Council on Islamic Education, with connections to Saudi Arabia, will supply the teaching materials.

The Thomas More Law Center said its role will be to act as co-counsel with attorney David Jerushalmi, who already has begun pursuing Freedom of Information Act requests for information about the school.

"Thus far, his requests have gone unanswered, leading to increased suspicion that the school as currently configured cannot meet state educational standards," the legal group said. "Moreover, several factors, including an executive summary of the KGIA proposal, point to the school as an anti-American, anti-Christian, and anti-Jewish propaganda center paid for by American tax dollars."

The center said some of the school's promoters have ties to the Council on American-Islamic Relations, which has been named by federal officials as an unindicted co-conspirator in a Texas case dealing with terror.

On KGIA's advisory board is Imam Talib Abdul-Rashid of the Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood, which proclaims this slogan: "The Quran is our constitution, Jihad is our way, And death in the way of Allah is our promised end."

The new school's executive summary talks about students in hallways adorned with portraits of Arab philosophers, inventors, poets and musicians. But it doesn't mention George Washington, Thomas Jefferson or Abraham Lincoln.

"We cannot ignore the fact that according to a 2005 report by the Center for Religious Freedom, mosques throughout America are depositories for venomous anti-American, anti-Christian, anti-Jewish propaganda disseminated by the Saudi government," Thompson said.

He noted publicly funded Islamic schools have popped up in several communities where officials routinely ban religious expressions by Christian students as unconstitutional but are promoting the Islamic studies under the "guise of promoting multiculturalism and diversity."

"Chancellor Klein has attempted to assuage citizen fears that KGIA is a madrassa by promising to monitor the school for any religious violations," the law center said. "However, once the school is operational, any attempt to monitor for religious expressions … may well be challenged as a constitutional violation in itself."

The center in 2002 filed a lawsuit against California's Byron Union School District because of its course to teach seventh-graders to act as Muslims, including requirements to memorize verses and prayers from the Quran.

As WND reported, more recently, the center helped encourage California's Carver Elementary to change plans for a special time and room designated for Islamic prayers during class time.