

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **The Satanic Temple to Distribute Educational Religious Materials in Florida Public Schools**

*Controversial Organization Aligns with Freedom From Religion Foundation in Accordance with School Board Policy*

**NEW YORK, NY – September 15, 2014** - In response to a recent School Board decision in Orange County, Florida that allows for the dissemination of religious materials in public schools, [The Satanic Temple](#) has announced they will follow suit by providing Satanic materials to students during the new school year. Among the materials to be distributed are pamphlets related to the Temple's tenets, philosophy and practice of Satanism, as well as information about the legal right to practice Satanism in school.

This effort came about when the Orange County school system allowed an evangelical Christian group to distribute Bibles while censoring atheist materials distributed by the Wisconsin-based [Freedom From Religion Foundation](#) (FFRF), a nonprofit that strives to uphold the principle of separation of state and church. In response, FFRF sued the Orange County School Board. Neither FFRF nor The Satanic Temple agree with the school board's decision to allow the distribution of religious materials in schools; however, The Satanic Temple seeks to ensure that pluralism is respected whenever the Church/State division is breached.

The Satanic Temple's spokesperson, Lucien Greaves, explains, "We would never seek to establish a precedent of disseminating our religious materials in public schools because we believe our constitutional values are better served by respecting a strong separation of Church and State. However, if a public school board is going to allow religious pamphlets and full Bibles to be distributed to students -- as is the case in Orange County, Florida -- we think the responsible thing to do is to ensure that these students are given access to a variety of differing religious opinions, as opposed to standing idly by while one religious voice dominates the discourse and delivers propaganda to youth."

The Satanic Temple is best known for their ongoing efforts to erect a Satanic monument at the Oklahoma State Capitol where they seek to contrast an already-standing 10 Commandments monument. As with the distribution of religious material in Florida schools, the Temple is clear that it would not seek to erect a monument if it were not for the prior presence of a public religious homage.

"Even as we prefer public policies respecting secularism, we feel that opportunities -- such as this -- to establish an equal voice for contrasting religious opinions in the public square, tend to favor marginalized, lesser-known, and alternative religions," Greaves explains. "I am quite certain that all of the children in these Florida schools are already aware of the Christian religion and it's Bible, and this might be the first exposure these children have to the actual practice of Satanism. We think many students will be very curious to see what we offer."

### **About The Satanic Temple**

The mission of The Satanic Temple is to encourage benevolence and empathy among all people, reject tyrannical authority, advocate practical common sense and justice, and be directed by the human conscience to undertake noble pursuits guided by the individual will. Civic-minded, The Satanic Temple has been involved in a number of good works including taking a stand against the controversial and extremist Westboro Baptist Church. For more information about The Satanic Temple, please visit <http://www.thesatanictemple.com/>.

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