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Founding Freedoms Law Center Wins Suit Against Loudoun County School Board for Violating Open Meetings Law

LOUDOUN, VA - Late Friday afternoon, Loudoun County Circuit Court Judge James Plowman ruled that the Loudoun County School Board violated Virginia's open meetings law at its June 22, 2021 meeting when it removed members of the public from the meeting room and continued holding a meeting that excluded the public. Founding Freedoms Law Center, in partnership with the law firm WhitbeckBennett PLLC, brought the case on behalf of Loudoun parents Megan Clegg, and Adam and Megan Rafalski.

"We are thrilled Judge Plowman vindicated the parents of Loudoun County," said Victoria Cobb, president of The Family Foundation. "Public school parents in Loudoun County have seen time and again that their views of parents are unwelcome. School boards across Virginia are now on notice – you can't ignore parents without paying the price."

Today's ruling comes on the heels of Governor Youngkin's unsuccessful attempt to allow Loudoun voters to choose an entirely new school board this fall.

Many of the parents barred from attending the entirety of the June 22, 2021 meeting in contention were in attendance to address transgender bathroom policies, including the parents of a high school student who was sexually assaulted at school.

The lawsuit was brought under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), on behalf of three Loudoun County parents. One of the parents, Megan Clegg, attended a June 22 school board meeting and was signed up to address the Board during the public comment time but was denied the opportunity to speak after the Board abruptly ended public comments. Then LCPS Superintendent Dr. Scott Ziegler suddenly and without warning declared, during a recess of the Board, said that the entire public gathering was an "unlawful assembly" making everyone in the room "subject to arrest" unless they left the building immediately. Citizens were not permitted to return when the Board recommenced its meeting. The Board thereafter continued to keep parents out of the room during public comment time at each subsequent meeting throughout nearly the rest of the year of 2021.

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