

Dear Dr. Binggeli:

It has come to my attention that the School Board of Brevard County will soon be considering whether to allow the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) to recruit in Brevard County public schools. As the executive director of the American Humanist Association, an organization devoted to protecting the rights of humanists and upholding First Amendment principles of church/state separation and religious freedom, I urge you not to allow the BSA to recruit in your schools.

The Boy Scouts of America is a private organization that has an official policy of denying membership to nontheist and gay individuals. To allow a group that openly discriminates to recruit in Brevard County public schools would thus make the school board complicit in those discriminatory practices.

Furthermore, to allow the Boy Scouts of America to recruit in Brevard County schools would run contrary to your own non-discrimination policy, which states:

It is the policy of the School Board of Brevard County to offer the opportunity to all students to participate in appropriate programs and activities without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, or age, except as otherwise provided by Federal law or by Florida state law.

Groups permitted to recruit in public schools should maintain a policy of openness for all students, regardless of religion, sexual orientation, or other protected statuses. Although the Boy Scouts of America is in many respects an excellent program, its policies of discrimination against nontheist and gay individuals should not be condoned. Thus, until the BSA revises these policies to be inclusive, it should not enjoy the benefits that groups who do not discriminate enjoy, such as the permission to recruit in public schools.

Sincerely,

Roy Speckhardt, executive director  
American Humanist Association