



PFOX

Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays

December 5, 2005

Ann Marie Weselak
National PTA President
541 North Fairbanks Court, Suite 1300
Chicago IL 60611-3396

Dear Ms. Weselak:

Congratulations on your election as NPTA president. This is in response to your interview in the Nov/Dec 2005 AFA Journal article entitled "PTA President Speaks Out – Group Will Not Promote Homosexuality."

In that interview, you state that PFLAG's presence at PTA's national convention was to help educate parents on the topic of bullying. That is incorrect. PFLAG's presence at PTA's convention was to provide misinformation against ex-gay families and to marginalize conservative Christians. I enclose copies of PFLAG's exhibit booth handouts, as follows:

- **Social Work Today article entitled "Reparative Therapy – What's Broken"** which refutes an ex-gay organization (NARTH) and recommends the anti-ex-gay publication 'Just the Facts about Sexual Orientation and Youth.' This infamous publication was the subject of a lawsuit by PFOX against the Montgomery County Maryland Board of Education, which listed "Just the Facts" as a resource in its sexual orientation curriculum. The judge threw out the entire curriculum as one-sided and biased.
- **An Open Letter to the Southern Baptist Convention by PFLAG** which urges Southern Baptists to vote against their resolution which accuses safe school programs of promoting homosexual lifestyles under the guise of anti-bullying agendas. Although PFLAG mentions an anti-gay incident in its letter, nowhere does PFLAG mention the harassment ex-gays and their friends face in our schools from anti-exgay groups that promote fear and hostility against the ex-gay community.
- **PFLAG's press release "PFLAG Returns to NPTA Convention on Safe Schools; Supports Exclusion of Psychologically Damaging Reparative Therapy Group"** which falsely labels PFOX as a "reparative therapy" group and essentially denies the existence of ex-gays. PFOX is a non-profit organization comprised of families and friends of gays and ex-gays. As the mother of a gay child, I resent PFLAG's discriminatory attitude against parents like me who unconditionally love their children and promote tolerance for all students regardless of sexual preference. PFOX has exhibited at national conventions across the country without incident.

What do any of these materials have to do with bullying? In their handout materials, why did PFLAG condemn ex-gays if they are only concerned with bullying issues? Why did PFLAG promote gay affirming therapy and refute reparative therapy if their exhibit was supposedly based only on safe schools? It seems that NPTA is allowing PFLAG to use PTA facilities to spread its message of intolerance against ex-gay families and bully

their supporters. Therefore, PTA is not a welcoming place for all families.

In the AFA interview, you also state that PFOX's application to exhibit was denied because NPTA screens exhibitors so that exhibits do not promote a specific agenda or program. Why was PFLAG's exhibit not screened? Differing standards for exhibitors smack of bias.

One of PFLAG's bullying materials, entitled "Families and Educators Partnering for Safe Schools," also enclosed, states that "[s]ocially conservative activists are demanding that schools promote ...reparative therapy programs" and working "to legislate against academic freedom to discuss GLBT people and issues unless it is through the filter of their particular belief system." The handout then lists 'Just the Facts' as a resource for parents and educators. 'Just the Facts' urges censorship of ex-gay materials in our schools and advocates silencing ex-gay students, teachers, and their friends. Its opposition to sharing school access with ex-gay representatives and allowing ex-gay resources to be made available to schools demonstrates its own disregard for diversity. It instructs school administrators to ignore any other point of view concerning homosexuality – even from parents whose children are students at the school. So why was this exhibit material not considered the promotion of a specific agenda? Again, differing standards for exhibitors smack of prejudice.

NPTA's April 21, 2005 letter to PFOX stated that our application was denied because NPTA does not have a position statement or resolution on our specific mission or programs. Yet our submitted exhibit materials included anti-bullying handouts. Why were PFLAG's bullying materials accepted but not PFOX's? Further, NPTA's resolution against bullying was passed at this year's convention, yet PFLAG first presented its bullying workshop and exhibit two years ago, before the resolution was passed.

PFLAG's workshop materials included a "Heterosexist Challenge" quiz, a "What is Heterosexual Privilege" handout on marriage, a "Learning About Sexual Diversity at School in Every Discipline" chart outlining how students in math class can make pie charts of how many gay and transgender people are visible in their textbooks and how vocabulary classes can read books about gender non-conforming kids, and "What is Age Appropriate" materials instructing primary school children to learn that "there aren't any girl colors and boy colors or girl games and boy games." These workshop materials do not seem related to the bullying issue.

One of the workshop's power point slides was entitled "Failure to Protect" and stated: "Because of their own conservative moral or religious beliefs, or ignorance of the seriousness of the problem, many teachers and administrators turn a blind eye, or even tacitly approve of, GLBT harassment and discrimination." This seems agenda driven and intolerant of conservative and faith-based families.

Ms. Weselak, like you, PFOX is committed to the PTA mission of tolerance for all families and children. Accordingly, PFOX will apply to exhibit and present a workshop at next year's NPTA convention. Please send us the exhibitor's application and workshop form. We would also like to sit down with you and your screening staff to review our anti-bullying materials to determine which materials are acceptable to PTA. We look forward to working with NPTA on a mutually agreeable basis. Thank you for your outreach to all families.

Sincerely,

Regina Griggs
PFOX Executive Director

cc: Terri Lindeman, NPTA program director (w/encs.)