ACLU wants prayer flag removed

CRANSTON (AP) – The American Civil Liberties Union says a banner with a prayer on it that hangs in the auditorium at Cranston High School North may be in violation of the First Amendment and seeks to have it removed.

The ACLU, citing a complaint from an unnamed parent, is asking the school department to take down the prayer that starts “Our Heavenly Father and urges students to do their best and bring credit to the school.

Lawyers get year for embezzlement

SOUTH KINGSTOWN, (AP) – A lawyer accused of stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars from his clients has been sentenced to a year in jail.

WJAR-TV reports that William Craven was also sentenced Monday to two years of home confinement upon his release. He was also ordered to repay the money, but prosecutors do not think he has the resources to make restitution.

Prosecutors say the 70-year-old Craven of Westerly embezzled hundreds of thousands of dollars from four trust funds he set up for families in the Westerly area.

Victim Corrin Aliger said more than $340,000 had been saved by her grandparents disappeared.

Craven pleaded no contest to the charges earlier this year.

RISC Business Network endorses Assembly candidate

WARWICK – Several Northern Rhode Island lawmakers are among the first nine candidates to sign up to the RI Statewide Coalition Business Network's Pro-Growth Agenda and win the group's endorsement in the upcoming primary and general elections.

The endorsement is intended to give the candidates access to contributions pledged mostly by small business owners and other like-minded individuals who see Rhode Island politics as dominated by special interest groups and labor unions to the detriment of the state's economy and fiscal policy.

The election effort – called RBN 2010 – is focused on being "multi-partisan." "We don't care if you are Republican or Democrat, Independent or Moderate," RBN's Jeff DeMers said Tuesday at a reception where the candidates were introduced. "If you are pro-business and pro-jobs, be able to support your case, we will do our best to find you work of small business people. We can no longer sit and let the people there get a casino.

Segal won't take PAC contributions

By JIM BARON

WARWICK – Several Northern Rhode Island lawmakers are among the first nine candidates to sign up to the RI Statewide Coalition Business Network's Pro-Growth Agenda and win the group's endorsement in the upcoming primary and general elections.

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Twin Rivers lobbyists override

ISEE OUR AD TODAY’S PAGE!
Learning

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Actually, it's anything to attend if they want to call themselves — officially — a Crusader, as gaining membership is a college-like application process,

The curriculum, custom-made for The College Crusade of Rhode Island, introduces sixth-graders to the academic, social and personal challenges of middle school. The coursework includes exercises in active listening, note-taking, reading and writing. It also addresses memory improvement, test-taking, learning styles and time and classroom management. Via this program, students acquire a host of new skills they can apply daily during their classes.

"A lot of research was done by John Matson, who is our curriculum development specialist, and he researched how middle school study; he found children needed certain skill areas, then prepared them for such a change (from elementary to middle school)," stated Laurel Shepard, the Crusade's Admissions Manager. "Simply put, this just gives the kids a head start into middle school.

"The things we focus on: How to prepare to study, and actively listen in the classroom — that is, we give them skills on how to pay attention, strategies for note-taking, and how to truly listen to what the teacher is saying," she added. "There's also reading for success, which is achieved through the "SQIR" method. That's taught in every middle school, so we're educating them on how even before they attend their first day."

Adam Tarczuk, the "Ways to A's" program coordinator, offered an example from his previous experience working as a Crusade Advisor at Tolman High.

"I know that, in Pawtucket, there will be some students who will go with their families to Colombia or Dominican Republic during the summer and they'd have a huge chunk of it," he explained. "Obviously, teachers won't go over that material so as not to hold back the ones who attended. What we do is help fill in the gaps.

"For the "SQIR" method, it means: "Survey, Question, Read, Write, and Review it — that is, a book or something else they're reading. It's a strategy to help them comprehend what they're reading. We actually have them read a passage from "Freak the Mighty," a popular book written by Rodman Philbrick at the sixth-grade reading level.

"When that's done, (the students) must answer those questions using the "SQIR" method," he added.

Tarczuk laughed when asked if teachers skills on how to pay attention, this would be a "Freak" of a class. "These are 10th-graders. "Ways to A's" program (they must complete a post-program test) to measure gains achieved during the four days, their parents must then report to a College Crusade membership orientation, which introduces them to helping their children succeed in academic.

This isn't a program for gifted students, but instead for those who really have a passion about doing well in middle and high school in order to move on to college," Tarczuk said.

"This isn't a summer school, not even close, though some of the kids may say that. The instruction is always hands-on. They get to work in groups, with more engaging banter.

"If I was a kid again — obviously I'm not — I'd want to be a College Crusader because I would have an advisor in my school who would provide guidance and support to help prepare me for college," he continued. "So, this all starts not, not at a high school junior or senior. Students don't have to have a future in mind, naturally as a teacher. I had just finished receiving my certificate in education from Providence College, and I found out the College Crusade was looking for someone to work with this (Ways to A's) program.

"Again, this sets them up for a great jump start into middle school."

Three in the past who have revealed their tips about excelling academically have included police officers, journalists, even Sen. Jack Reed.

"I want desperately to get a head start for school, but also college, because that's my dream," offered Janis Dias, 11, of Pawtucket. "I want to be a veterinarian someday, so I love animals. I decided that when I was younger. I saw animals dying for no reason; and I've also seen the oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. That makes me sad, that innocent animals have died. I want to help."

Stated Haadir Holloway, another Pawtucket who will attend Curtin-McCabe Elementary School in late August, "I'm going to be a mechanical engineer, but I also want to be a game engineer, so I can create computer games. When I was little, they always fascinated me, and I want to help build and design them.

Another key ingredient: The "Ways to A's" program instructors are all former Crusaders themselves, as three of the six represent the Blackstone Valley area.

Among them: Sarah Vazquez of Pawtucket, a Rhode Island College fifth-year senior pursuing her Bachelor's in business management; Kathy Toro, another Pawtucket who graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 2009 with a Bachelor's in psychology; and Rhajsa Laster of East Providence, who in June gained a Bachelor's in human development/family studies from URI.